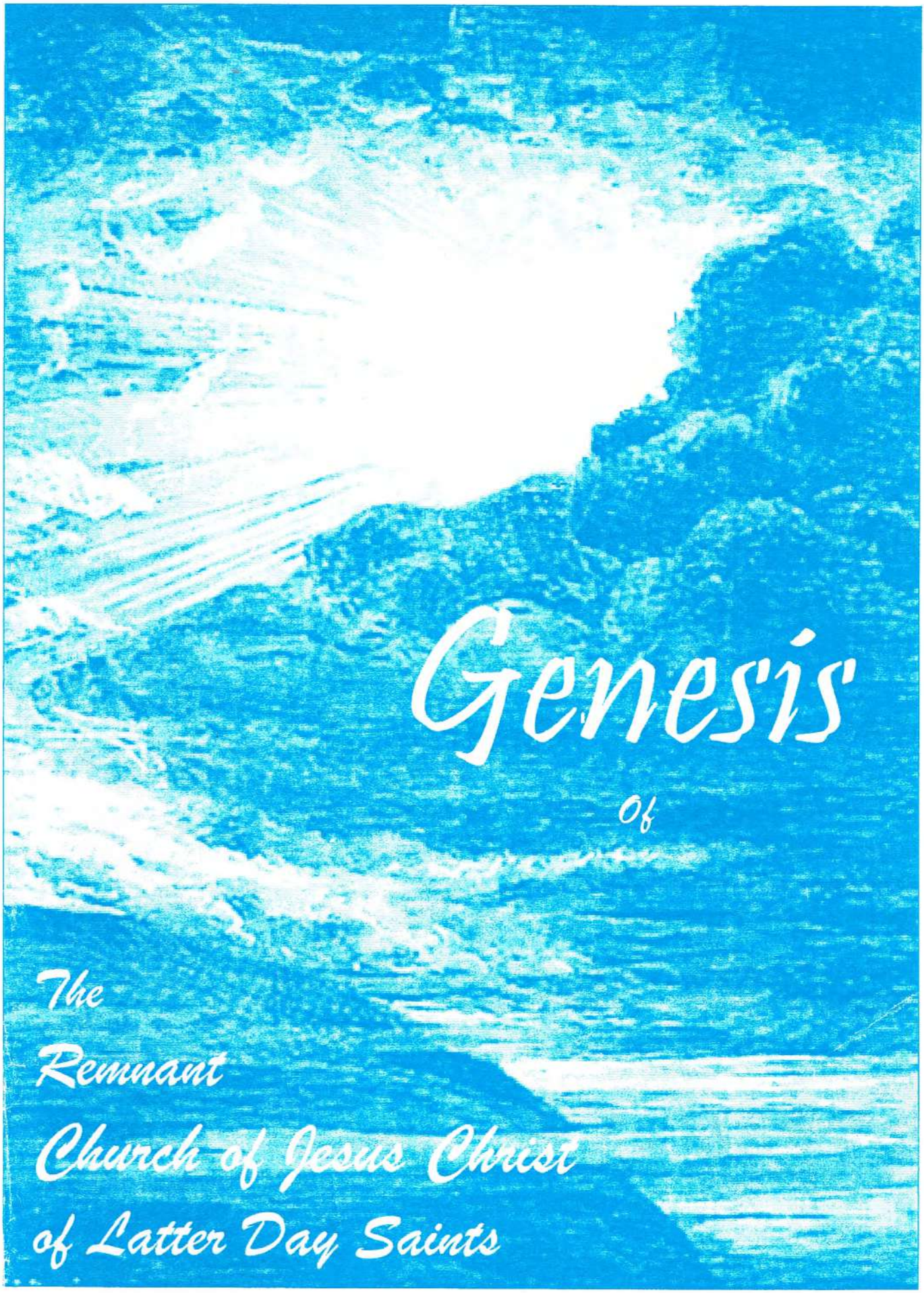
Genesis
Of
The
Remnant
Church of Jesus Christ
of Latter Day Saints

INTRODUCTION

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While the contents of this timely publication are, in many instances, the reflections of the various contributing authors, either written for distribution or presentation to various gatherings, they do not necessarily represent a formal position of the Church in relation to the subjects under consideration. Only that which has received General Conference approval has the status of officially representing the Church's position.

With the sincere expectation that the material presented on the following pages will indeed witness of a "...great and marvelous work," continued and ongoing in the Remnant Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, we present its contents for that cause.

THE FIRST PRESIDENCY
January 2003

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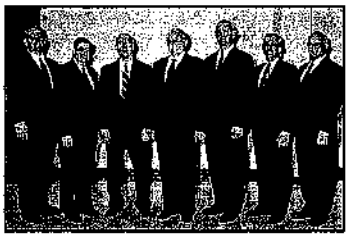

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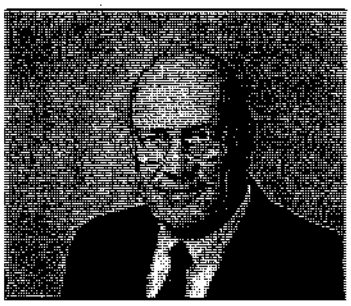

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The Center Place Prayer and Study Group

Therefore, verily I say unto you, my friends, Call your solemn assembly, as I have commanded you; and as all have not faith, seek ye diligently and teach one another words of wisdom; yea, ...seek learning even by study, and also by faith. Organize yourselves; prepare every needful thing... (D&C 85:36a,b).

Motivated by the spirit of the foregoing counsel the Conference of Restoration Elders held its first assembly in April of 1993. Though attended by approximately 400 elders from "Restoration branches," and many who came from isolated locations where their numbers precluded holding regular services, the reaction was varied. Some were uncertain and doubtful, though the majority went home committed to carry on. The 1994 Conference witnessed a somewhat smaller attendance but enthusiasm and support to carry on was clearly evident. Various elements within the initial framework were however, already moving toward fragmentation, extending missions abroad [Europe, Africa, Central America, etc.] without the authority of a renewed and legitimate church structure.

Sensing the need for an earnest search for light and direction, especially in response to what had become known the "Blackgum Experience" of September 1994, an invitation was extended by the Chairman of the Conference to ten especially selected locations across the country, with an appeal to call together a small group of Melchisedec brethren in each setting to undertake a sustained period of study, prayer and fasting, for divine direction.

The goal was to gain a better understanding of our history, "who we are," and know more assuredly the "laws and covenants" of the Church that "...we may not be deceived." From this beginning, eight men in the Center Place began meeting once a month for concentrated prayer and study in response to the admonition given in D&C 9:3a-d, ***"Behold, you have not understood; you have supposed that I would give it unto you, when you took no thought, save it was to ask me; but, behold, I say unto you, that you must study it out in your mind; then you must ask me if it be right, and if it is right, I will cause that your bosom shall burn within you; therefore, you shall feel that it is right; but if it be not right, you shall have no such feelings, but you shall have a stupor of thought, that shall cause you to forget the thing which is wrong ...."***

During the ensuing years in the Independence area this group gradually became twelve in number. As the Holy Spirit blessed and guided their search it became apparent that many others were desirous of joining in the objective first envisioned and a general invitation was extended to all Melchisedec brethren in the Central Area who desired to commit themselves to the preparation and discipline required. The larger number of brethren in close proximity enabled the approximately 40 men who responded to come together twice monthly for presentations on vital doctrinal subjects.

Among the topics presented during the fall and spring of 1998-99 were:
Role of the High Priests in a Disorganized Church; Prophetic Lineage; Theocracy, Democracy and Common Consent; Priesthood: Historical and Scriptural Foundations; The Gathering: 19th Century Utopian Dream-20th Century Dilemma; Prophetic Thought: Contemporary Christian View; End Time Prophecy: Elements of Church Government. These sessions were frequently interspersed with worship, prayer and discussion.

During the foregoing passage of time and the events which were occurring, the original prayer and study group continued to meet. Concurrently the spirit of prophecy was being experienced by way of counsel and warning to the Elders' Conferences and to individuals in many places, much as was the experience of the early pioneers of the Reorganization - Zenos Gurly, Jason Briggs, Henry Deam and others. [See pages 36-42.]

On the 18th of May 1999, a day long to be remembered, twelve men, most of whom had been associated with the prayer and study group from its origin, having persevered against much criticism and many false accusations, gathered in response to the call of the Spirit in Carthage, Missouri. There they would affix their signatures to a document entitled "A Proclamation and Invitation to the Faithful," and testify of the spirit of revelation which had moved the scattered and fragmented Saints toward the beginning steps of renewing the true Church, as restored to the earth through Joseph Smith, Jr.

Acting under the direction of the spirit of revelation and their office and calling as Elders, Seventy, High Priests, and Patriarchs, each man present bore witness of the inspiration that had come by placing his signature on the document. The entire matter was then submitted to the body of High Priests, as provided by the law. (D & C 122:10) The matter was now in the hands of those holding the highest authority to act.

The events that occurred thereafter are recorded on the following pages. They tell the story of how the Lord God has again heard and answered the earnest prayers of his covenant people. May the Holy Spirit of promise which touches our hearts, and by which we reaffirm our testimony, guide and bless the search of every faithful soul toward Zion the Beautiful which now, more than ever, beacons us on. ■

A PROCLAMATION AND INVITATION TO THE FAITHFUL

May 18, 1999

We, the undersigned, having deliberated long and prayerfully, hereby set our hands to faithfully uphold and diligently teach the commandments of God that brought forth and sustain the Latter Day Gospel. We are painfully aware of the numerous organizations and individuals that claim to represent the Lord, and deplore the mounting confusion that is increasingly evident among once active members of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Consequently, we feel compelled by a Higher Power to once again "*earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints*" (Jude 1:3).

In response to the prompting of the Holy Spirit, we now call upon the Saints, wherever they may be, to receive with prayerful consideration this general epistle concerning a continuing movement to renew and sustain the Church of Jesus Christ. We affirm that it has fallen into a condition of apostasy and confusion. Further, by direction of that same good Spirit we also declare, as was the case during the years following the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum, that among the many claims which have been and are being made to succession and authority in our day, there is not one which to our knowledge has Divine sanction that sustains and guides His Church.

It is now evident that the Conference of Restoration Elders is following a course of action different from that which will focus first on establishing a firm foundation on which the faithful Saints can stand together in Kingdom-building efforts, and from which we can reach out authoritatively and effectively to a needy world in response to the Lord's great commission. Therefore, pursuant to the laws and commandments contained in the Holy Scriptures, the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants, we raise this proclamation of commitment to faithfully work toward the restoration of order in the Church and, under divine direction, to hold high the banner of Christ's Church. We recognize that we must be especially directed by the Doctrine and Covenants and the binding Rules and Resolutions wherein they pertain to the sacred duty of the Melchisedec priesthood to govern and protect the affairs of the Church.

In sending forth this communication, we take our commission from the Holy Spirit and the Word of God, stated by the Prophet Isaiah as the "*law and the testimony*" (Isaiah 8:20). We also reaffirm our determination to remain faithful to the founding purposes of the Conference of Restoration Elders and believe ourselves and all others who are faithful to the commandments of God to be the Restored Church of April 6, 1830 & 1852-1860 in succession. We act in fear and trembling before Almighty God as we witness the disregard for Divine commandments and, with the Apostles Peter and John of old, we solemnly and humbly declare we must obey God and not man (Acts 5:29).

Our position is best stated by President Israel A. Smith in his sermon to the 1952 General Conference commemorating the Centennial of the Reorganization, from which we quote:

> "And in such organized groups, indeed, was resident the power to reorganize the work; and from such integral units of the church the work of reorganizing began. The testimony of all concerned was that it was not a new organization. That was not necessary, for the original body had perpetual existence in and through its faithful adherents. Significantly, and as a matter of historical accuracy, in all the proceedings leading up to the reorganization of the presidency of the church, all references to the church read "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints." That was the name of the organization for many years until public indignation became so aroused against Mormon polygamy and the Mormon Church that sponsored it, the name "Reorganized" was added in order to minimize the confusion in the public mind respecting the two organizations. Besides the name of the church had no legal significance whatsoever—the whole controversy was in the domain of doctrine and tenets.
>
> "I have called your attention to the fact, and it should be reiterated, that notwithstanding the use of the word "reorganization" the name under which the church was called from the beginning was "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints." Thus it was officially named in all documents until 1866, when for reasons growing out of the efforts of national government to put a stop to polygamy, and to minimize the confusion in the public mind as to the two churches, the word "Reorganized" was added to the name. While enemies of the church have tried to make capital out of the use of the word, it has no bearing on the claim of the church as to being the lawful continuation of the original church.
>
> "That schism-departure from doctrine—had brought spiritual cleavage, and great loss cannot be denied. But in law, civil and divine, and in good conscience and reason, only such portion of the body of Christ as remained faithful to the doctrines of the church would have the right to realign its forces bring them together, and reform the broken ranks. There could never be any support in law or common sense for the theory that they who had *abandoned original tenets,* changed the ordinances and machinery of government, and brought in heresy, could be held to be the trustees of the body or even held to be the

church. Nor could they in any way prevent or hinder the faithful from carrying on under the law and the traditions of the original church." Conference Daily Edition, THE SAINTS HERALD, Mon., March 31, 1952.

In keeping with the foregoing statements of Brother Israel, it is our determined resolve to honor the historic pattern and to uphold the law as set forth in the Doctrine and Covenants by calling upon the "senior" (C.H., Vol. 3, pp 217-218 and see also D&C 104:4-7) among us to provide interim leadership in preparation for divine guidance toward further organization. This is in harmony with inspired counsel received at, or directed to, previous Conferences, and with the recommended restructuring to accept and to honor the presiding leadership of a "*...council of high priests*" (D&C 122:10a).

We believe, and we hereby testify, that the time has fully come and we are under judgment to heed the counsel the Lord has given us. It is our intention to devote ourselves with new resolve to obeying the Articles and Covenants of the faith. (See D&C 1:5; 17:13,25; 41:1; 42:4,5a,b; 58:4e; 90:3b,c; 137:6; and 140:5 as illustrative of countless others.)

We intend to carry on and we extend the invitation to all who are of like heart and mind, young and old, priesthood and member alike, to join with us in a faithful response to revive and restore, such as is in our power and authority, while confidently awaiting direction from our Lord which will set His Church fully in order once again. Prophets and seers have looked longingly to these latter days and for a faithful remnant who will covenant to keep all the commandments of God "*that the Kingdom of Heaven may come*" (D&C 65:1f).

The following summarizes the direction in which we believe ourselves called to proceed:

1. Reaffirm our commitment to the original purpose and intent of the Conferences of Restoration Elders while expressing our grave concern for any compromise which diminishes their validity under the law.
2. Stand fully behind and for the Statement of Faith and Doctrine approved by the 1993 Conference of Restoration Elders (Issue Number 16 – *Tidings of Zion*) as our foundational position regarding succession, reorganization and the role of the Melchisedec priesthood.
3. Formally acknowledge as spiritual guidance for present conditions the "Inspired Counsel" prepared for the 1997 Conference of Restoration Elders (as recommended by an overwhelming majority of active High Priests and Patriarchs) and printed in Issue No. 22, 1997, of "*Tidings of Zion*," and "A Message of Invitation and Admonition" as printed in Issue No. 29, 1998, of "*Tidings of Zion*."
4. Urge recognition of the lawful role of faithful High Priests to select a temporary council to provide interim leadership for guiding and renewing the Church. Request the body of High Priests to choose an appropriate number from within their ranks to provide for a Chairman, two Counselors, and not less than seven additional brethren to form said council of High Priests.
5. Recognizing that a legal name is necessary to function under the laws of the state and nation – and in accordance with the guidance of President Israel A. Smith as quoted above—the name, "Remnant Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints" will be used for identification and legal purposes, and as a means of emphasizing succession from the 1830 and 1852-1860 organizations.
6. Formulate the means for assembling faithful Melchisedec priesthood to work toward and prepare for a Conference, at the earliest appropriate time and place, which will provide for the inclusion of both Aaronic priesthood and the membership to act on behalf of the Church in legislative capacity.
7. Send forth far and wide a report of the outcome of the foregoing assembly, and extend an invitation to members, groups and branches to take their place—under the law—in the renewal and reconstruction of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints as we await further Divine guidance and the coming of a Prophet-President.

Yours in the bonds of Christ,

Jake F. Simmons	Conrad R. Faulk	R. J. Mendel
Fred N. Larsen	James L. Rogers	David W. Bowerman
Rodney Williams	Steve R. Church	Ernie L. Shank
Jesse J. Basse	C. Houston Hobart	Roger C. Gault

"Proclamation" – Background Study

As Melchisedec priesthood we are called upon to make decisions under the law to the best of our ability and the light God gives us. In D&C 9:3, we are admonished by the Lord to pray and study – "*I say unto you that you must study it out in your own mind; then you must ask me if it be right...*" It was for this purpose that a prayer and study group started meeting more than five years ago. It was, and is, their intent that the church affairs be conducted according to the Will of God as expressed in His law. The work of the ministry and the affairs of the church being the focus of their prayer and study.

In answer to that discipline, enlightenment was received from the scriptures, church history and the working of the Holy Spirit. In response, the "Proclamation" was formulated and passed on to the High Priests—at which time the prayer and study group withdrew from any further action.

To assist those who desire to do further study, the following references to portions of Church History and the Doctrine and Covenants have been provided. The brief extracts quoted from those references are not intended to be complete and exhaustive. They are only intended to be a quick reference and an encouragement to study the entire scope of the material referenced.

Scriptures

D&C 9:3a-d study – seek – pray "*Behold, you have not understood; you have supposed that I would give it unto you, when you took no thought, save it was to ask me; but, behold, I say unto you, that you must* ***study it out in your mind; then*** *you must* ***ask me*** *if it be right, and if it is right, I will cause that your bosom shall burn within you; therefore, you shall feel that it is right; but if it be not right, you shall have no such feelings, but you shall have a stupor of thought, that shall cause you to forget the thing which is wrong;...*"

D&C 58:6c-f not commanded in all things "*...for, behold,* ***it is not meet that I should command in all things****, for he that is compelled in all things, the same is a slothful and not a wise servant; wherefore he receiveth no reward. Verily I say,* ***Men should be anxiously engaged in a good cause, and do many things of their own free will****, and bring to pass much righteousness; for the power is in them, wherein they are agents unto themselves. And inasmuch as men do good, they shall in nowise lose their reward. But* ***he that doeth not anything until he is commanded****, and receiveth a commandment with doubtful heart, and keepeth it with slothfulness, the same is damned.*"

D&C 99:1a general council of high priests "*This day* ***a general council of twenty-four high priests*** *assembled at the house of Joseph Smith, Jr., by revelation, and proceeded to organize the high council of the church of Christ, which was to consist of twelve high priests, and one or three presidents, as the case might require.*"

D&C 99:3 council supported by vote of priesthood & members – "*The number composing the council, who* ***voted in the name and for the church*** *in appointing the above-named councilors, were forty-three, as follows: nine high priests, seventeen elders, four priests, and thirteen members.*"

D&C 99:11a,b high priests—power to call and organize a council ***"The high priests, when abroad, have power to call and organize a council*** *after the manner of the foregoing, to settle difficulties when the parties, or either of them, shall request it; and the said council of high priests shall have power to appoint one of their own number, to preside over such council for the time being.*"

D&C 104:3b right of presidency "*The Melchisedec priesthood holds* ***the right of presidency****, and has power and authority over all the offices in the church, in all ages of the world, to administer in spiritual things.*"

D&C 104:5 right to officiate in their own standing ***"High priests, after the order of the Melchisedec priesthood, have a right to officiate in their own standing,*** *under the direction of the Presidency, in administering spiritual things, and also in the office of an elder, priest (of the Levitical order), teacher, deacon, and member.*"

D&C 104:7 right to officiate in all these offices of the church when there are no higher authorities present – "*The high priest and elder are to administer in spiritual things, agreeably to the covenants and commandments of the church; and* ***they have a right to officiate*** *in all these offices of the church when there are no higher authorities present.*"

D&C 122:9b where organization has been arranged... ***"Where organization has been arranged*** *and officers have been ordained and set in order; the* ***standing ministry in their order****; high priests, elders, priests, teachers, and deacons.*"

D&C 122:10a or—a council of high priests "*Should the church fall into disorder, or any portion of it, it is the duty of the several quorums of the church, or any one of them to take measures to correct such disorder; through the advice and direction of the Presidency, the Twelve, the Seventy,* ***or a council of high priests, in case of emergency;...***"

Church History

Vol. 1, Pg. 264 a council of high priests "About this time troubles arose in Missouri, which occasioned the authorities at Kirtland much anxious concern, Joseph wrote them warning them that the judgments of God awaited them if they repented not. **A council of twelve high priests** also took the matter under advisement and appointed Orson Hyde and Hyrum Smith to write them,..."

Vol. 1, Pg. 272 conference of high priests "Brother Joseph, and certain others, have written to you on this all-important subject, but you have never been apprised of these things, by the united voice of **a conference of those high priests** that were present at the time this commandment was given."

Vol. 1, Pg. 284 a council of high priests "On Tuesday, March 26, 1833, a council of high priests met at Independence, Jackson County, Missouri. Of this council Joseph writes: - 'On the twenty-sixth of March **a council of high priests**, twenty-one in number, convened for the general welfare of the church, in what was then called Zion, in Jackson County, Missouri, on account of a revelation, my letter, and an epistle from the church in

Kirtland; a solemn assembly had been called, and a sincere and humble repentance manifested, insomuch, that on the twenty-sixth of February, one month previous, a general epistle has been written in conference, which was satisfactory to the Presidency and church at Kirtland.

"At the sitting of the council of the 26th of March, according to the plan taught at the solemn assembly which was that **the seven high priests who were sent from Kirtland to build up Zion;** viz., Oliver Cowdery, W.W. Phelps, John Whitmer, Sidney Gilbert, Bishop Partridge, and his two counselors, should stand at the head of affairs, relating to the church, in that section of the Lord's vineyard; and **these seven men, the common consent of the branches, comprising the church, were to appoint presiding elders, to take the watch care of the several branches, as they were appointed. Now, therefore, as many of the high priests and elders went up to Zion and commenced regulating and setting the branches in order, allowing themselves as much power by the authority of their priesthood and gift of the Holy Ghost as those set apart and appointed to preside over the branches, it became necessary to call the council now spoken of, to set in order the elders of Israel;** when, after a long discussion, it was decided from the revelations that the order taught in the solemn assembly was correct; and that **the elders, when they arrived at Zion, were bound by the authorities set in the church, to be submissive to the powers that be; their labors and callings being more particularly to push the people together from the ends of the earth to the places the Lord appointed. This decision in council gave general satisfaction, and the elders soon saw the beauty of every man in his place.**" Times and Seasons, vol. 5, pp. 738

Vol. 1, Pgs. 370-372 **a council of high priests in Zion** "Joseph relates several items of business pertaining to church affairs which are best told in his own language, ...which is found on page 850 of volume 6, Times and Seasons; August 21. At **a council of high priests in Zion,** Elder Christian Whitmer was ordained to the high priesthood; and on the 28th, the council resolved, that no high priest, elder, or priest, shall ordain any priest, elder, or high priest in the land of Zion, without the consent of a conference of high priests. **...Ten high priests were appointed to watch over the ten branches of the church in Zion.**"

Vol. 3, Pg. 200 **God's law shall be kept** "While pondering in my heart the situation of the church, on the 18th day of November 1851, on the prairie, about three miles northwest of Beloit, Wisconsin the spirit of the Lord came upon me, and the visions of truth opened to my mind, and the Spirit of the Lord said unto me. *'Verily, verily, saith the Lord, even Jesus Christ, unto his servant, Jason W. Briggs, concerning the church: behold, I have not cast off my people; neither have I changed in regard to Zion. Yea, verily, my people shall be redeemed, and* ***my law shall be kept*** *which I revealed unto my servant, Joseph Smith, Jr., for I am God and not man, and who is he that shall turn me from my purpose, or destroy whom I would preserve? Wolves have entered into the flock, and who shall deliver them? Where is he that giveth his life for the flock? Behold, I will judge those who call themselves shepherds, and have preyed upon the flock of my pastures.'"*

Vol. 3, Pg. 211 **acting as members and officers of the original church** – Of this conference, and the events following, Elder Briggs writes: "...The position taken by this conference was, it must be seen, an anomalous one. All similar assemblages or bodies convened and acted under the call of a leader or head; but this acknowledged none. Others were the results of a professed head. This was a preceding, or preparatory to an expected head; and the epithet of being 'a headless body' was freely cast at the brethren. Yet to them was visible the tokens of divine care, which, like the cloud of the size 'of a man's hand' to the ancient prophet, confirmed their faith, that what had been promised would surely be fulfilled, in 'the due time of the Lord.' And they were determined to wait and prepare for that 'time.'" – The Messenger, vol. 2, p. 9. **There was no intention at this time of organizing a new church, but these men were acting as members and officers of the original church, regulating and setting in order the church, according to the law, as they understood it, and in harmony with instruction given to them.**"

Vol. 3, Pg. 212 **organizing to the pattern** "From this conference the elders returned to their homes and fields of labor with a deeper sense of responsibility and a more determined purpose to hold up the standard of Christ, raised anew by the Spirit's power, which manifested, from time to time, **that we should organize, in preparation for the reestablishment of the quorums and First Presidency of the Church, according to the pattern in the Book of Covenants.** But how this was to be brought about, no one presumed to know."

Vol. 3, Pg. 213 **temporary presiding officer** "The following resolution was adopted to provide for **a temporary presiding officer,** while awaiting the coming of the promised President of the High Priesthood: 'Resolved, that the highest authority among the priesthood represent the legitimate President as a presiding authority.' – Church Record, page 7."

Vol. 3, Pg. 213 **awaiting patiently the unfolding plan** "Thus ended the year 1852. This band of saints had renounced all would-be leaders, and in confident expectancy were waiting for promised light and wisdom. Yet they were resolved not to act rashly or hastily, but to **await patiently the unfolding of the plan,** as in the wisdom of God it should be revealed. So none presumed to know just what was to be done. It was enough for them to know that God had promised, and that he was able to fulfill. However, these days of patient and confident waiting must have been fraught with anxious care."

Vol. 3, Pg. 215 **God's law shall be kept** ***"They seek to build up their own kingdoms, to suit their own pleasures, but I countenance it not, saith God.*** *I have given my law: I shrink not from my word.* ***My law is given in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants,*** *but they have disregarded my law and trampled upon it, and counted it a light thing, and obeyed it not; but my word is the same yesterday as to-day, and forever."*

Vol. 3, Pg. 217 **respect authority in my church** *"Verily, thus saith the Lord, as I said unto my servant Moses, 'See thou do all things according to the pattern,' so say I unto you. Behold, the pattern is before you. It is my will that* ***you respect authority in my church;*** *therefore let the greatest among you preside at your conference."*

Vol. 3, Pg. 221 **a command from God – authority to do it** "I will here add a word for the benefit of others. When the commandment to organize first came we thought it impossible for us to obey, not having authority to ordain apostles, etc.; but we learned what every Latter Day Saint must learn, that **a command from God is authority to do all that he requires,** be it more or less." – True Latter Day Saints' Herald, vol. 1, p. 58

Vol. 3, Pg. 649 **real power to command – is in it** "Hence, however much virtue may be in a command given of God, as emanating from him, **the real power of the command** unto the person commanded is found in the obedience to what is commanded."

Vol. 3, Pg. 663 **wait- vs -do what is present duty** "If we may judge from the present disposition manifested in opposition to proposed schemes for the further development and organization of the preaching element of the church, one difficulty to the proposed establishment was, **the existence of a preponderating**

disposition to wait to be told what to do, rather than to do what was clearly pointed out as a present and necessary duty."

Vol. 3, Pg. 664 conferences not creatures of branches "The holding of **local and general conferences** we believe to have been, and still to be, one of the surest, safest, and best means that could have been or that can be used to the accomplishment of a proper assimilation of thought and spirit among brethren, and the right understanding of doctrine among the teachers and those taught. These local and general conferences we believe to be authorized by the general laws of the church under which the promulgation of the gospel was to be carried on; and **they are not therefore the creatures of local organizations called churches or branches."**

Vol. 3, Pg. 665 localizing of religious government "The localizing a center of religious government was a measure introduced with a view of facilitating the carrying on of the work in its entirety; not for the purpose of centralizing power. Those who now fear the concentration of power would do well to make a more thorough examination of the objects of church association, and study to a better conclusion the theory of the gospel as applied to human associations."

Vol. 3, Pg. 678 trying to secure a unity – is our duty "We are **striving to secure a unity of belief** among the one-time Latter Day Saints, our only intention towards them being for their good."

Vol. 3, Pg. 683 abuses in raising money "When it became necessary in the past **to raise money for church purposes**, a commandment was given, showing the way; this way in its right meaning must become sooner or later a measure of the church polity for that purpose. Its **abuses in the past will not excuse** us, nor will our disposition to do, if we leave undone those things we know how to do, avail us."

Vol. 3, Pg. 684 the laws governing the church are in the Bible, Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants – "To insist that the laws to govern the church are found in the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and the Book of Doctrine and Covenants; that whatever is contained in those books as doctrine for the salvation of man, is the doctrine of the church; that whatever is taught to the church as doctrine, not in accordance with, or denies, contradicts, is in opposition to or contravenes the teaching found in those books is not the doctrine of the church; that all men, Latter Day Saints included, are amenable to God for their acts here, and always; that the scriptures are to all men for guidance, and that Latter Day Saints are not privileged to disregard that guidance, and that the Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants are scripture to Latter Day Saints."

Vol. 5, Pgs. 345-355 Foundations of Reorganization See "Statements by Joseph Smith III" on the listed pages of Church History.

Vol. 6, Pg. 570 priority to one holding highest office "When the conference has assembled and has been duly called to order, and the business properly stated, the common rule would permit any member of the assembly entitled to voice and vote to make such nomination; but a custom of courtesy having been established in the church, **a priority of privilege should be cheerfully accorded to the one holding office by ordination;..."**

Vol. 6, Pg. 571 justified by spirit of wisdom and revelation "...the church is justified in pursuing that course which is to it **justified by the spirit of wisdom and revelation** resting with it in its various quorums and organizations, for the various works of the church."

Vol. 6, Pg. 571 in answer to prayer "In answer to prayer those men were, by revelation, directed to the Book of Doctrine and Covenants as containing the rules of the law in the observances of which the foundation and superstructure of complete reorganization could be safely accomplished."

Four Purposes of the Elders' Conference

1. For spiritual preparation and to unify our efforts on behalf of the work to which we are called.
2. Much needed fellowship and fraternity to prepare us to defend and preserve the faith.
3. Identify and seek divine guidance concerning the critical issues now confronting the church.
4. Chart a course of action that will maintain the gospel as restored in 1830.

Four Steps from the Pattern Committee

1. Command from God—enlightenment. **[We are, we believe, moving in harmony with that key requirement.]**
2. Melchisedec priesthood – organizing and setting in order. **[In this instance, we are moving through the appropriate leadership of the high priests of the Melchisedec order.]**
3. Provision for general conference. **[This is a part of our planning. A date has already been proposed and planning is underway.]**
4. Await the designation of a prophet/president who will have the responsibility of organizing the first presidency and assembling the quorums as provided by law. –**[This is an absolute, we know of no alternative.]**

Quotes from the "Proclamation"

"In response to the prompting of the Holy Spirit"
"By direction of that same good Spirit"
"Pursuant to the laws and commandments"
"We take our commission from the Holy Spirit"
"It is our determined resolve to honor the historic pattern"
"This is in harmony with inspired counsel"
"We are under judgment to heed the counsel the Lord has given"
"Such as is in our power and authority"

By What Authority A Council of High Priests

High Priest Lee Killpack
(Presented to the Priesthood of Blue Springs Restoration Branch)

Authority in the Church is based upon call and command of God, obedience to divine instruction, the assent of the people, and ordination by those having authority.

President Joseph Smith III said of his Letter of Instruction, "I regard that letter of instruction as one of the most important documents that has ever been presented to the church." (RLDS C.H., Vol 5, p. 598) He premised the document with six guiding principles, the first of which I should like to refer: "Priesthood delegated authority is conferred for the express purpose of accomplishing by human means the work of the divine mind for the benefit of mankind." This is true irrespective of office.

In the Letter of Instruction, premise #2 is that office in the priesthood is intended to designate the general and specific work that the individual called, chosen, and ordained to an office, is to do. Further premises state that office is not conferred to increase importance of the individual or as a means of self-aggrandizement or personal emulation, but rather all offices are equal before God, that the honor of each as to the individual holder is a result of the manner in which the duties of the office are performed. Also, that persons ordained to any office in the priesthood of the church are so ordained because they are called of God by revelation.

In Doctrine and Covenants 104:44 we are told "*Wherefore, now let every man learn his duty, and to act in the office in which he is appointed, in all diligence. He that is slothful shall not be counted worthy to stand, and he that learns not his duty and shows himself not approved, shall not be counted worthy to stand. Even so. Amen*"

Men have been called to the priesthood and to individual office and therefore to specific responsibilities and duties. Each is equal in honor before God when faithful to his calling, albeit they have different duties as per their offices.

Having laid this foundation let us turn to the point of our study "By What Authority – A Council of High Priests." High Priests by their calling and office have certain unique duties and responsibilities. In Hebrews 5:1-3 Paul said, *"For every High Priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins, who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity. And by reason thereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself to offer for sins."*

Among the gifts that may be offered by High Priests are a profound love of God, a love for the Word, and an abiding love for the brothers and sisters. High Priests must be willing to offer sacrifice for sins through the sacrifice of self and in the expression of a willingness to bear the sins of the people. Moses demonstrated a willingness to plead before the Lord for his forgiveness of the people's sin. *"If not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written."* (Exodus 32:32)

Alma said (Alma 9:64) *"And those priests* [high priests] *were ordained after the order of his Son, in a manner that thereby the people might know in what manner to look forward to his Son for redemption."* Further, Alma (10:7-15) described the work that was done by the High Priesthood in the days of Melchisedec; *"Now this Melchisedec was king over the land of Salem; and his people had waxed strong in iniquity and abominations; yea, they had all gone astray; they were full of all manner of wickedness; but Melchisedec having exercised mighty faith, and received the office of the high priesthood, according to the holy order of God, did preach repentance unto his people. And behold, they did repent; and Melchisedec did establish peace in the land in his days; ..."*

Alma II was called to the office of High Priest by his father. Alma served for a time as both the chief judge of the people and the High Priest of the church. When circumstances in the church had deteriorated badly, Alma gave up the position of chief judge and devoted the remainder of his days to the work of the High Priest of the church. His response to his duty as High Priest was recorded as follows: *"Alma delivered up the judgment seat and confined himself wholly to the high priesthood of the holy order of God, to the testimony of the word, according to the spirit of revelation and prophecy."* (Alma 2:28) He, Alma, went forth establishing regulations in the churches of the land. In Alma 6:1 it is recorded that *"having established the order of the church"* and in verse 5 the record says *"he began to teach the people in the land of Melek, according to the holy order of God by which he had been called; and he began to teach the people throughout all the land of Melek...."*

Today the Church stands in need of a body of High Priests who according to their calling and office and its inherent authority will confine themselves wholly to

the High Priesthood of the Holy Order of God, to the testimony of the word, according to the spirit of revelation and prophecy, and who will also by that office, calling, and authority seek to establish the order of the church. This body of High Priests must also be prepared to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sin.

On numerous occasions the scriptural record indicates that conditions required the ordering of the church from its wanderings into sinful ways (Moses, Melchisedec, and Alma). Individuals are often guilty of such mischief and also must be brought back to proper responses. Today the church needs correction and refocus. Are there those whose charge and duty as described in the law make them responsible for such correction? We need only to look at the scriptures for our answer. Section 122:10 of the Doctrine and Covenants clearly identifies the responsibility. *"Should the church fall into disorder, or any portion of it, it is the duty of the several quorums of the church, or any one of them to take measures to correct such disorder; through the advice and direction of the Presidency, the Twelve, the Seventy, or a council of high priests, in case of emergency;...."*

In Brother Joseph's Letter of Instruction (C.H., Vol. 6, p. 573) he said, "But there is another provision of the law to which attention is called, that should the emergency arise by the death or defection of the incumbent of the Presidency and the death or deposition of one of the remaining members of the Quorum of Presidency, leaving but one in minority, that it would be well for the church to remember and bring into operation, *if serious necessity should occur*. It is distinctly stated in the law that the high council, presumably the Standing High Council of the church in Zion, is in equality in its decision with that of the Quorum of Presidency or that of the Twelve, supplying the third member of the three-fold principle in spiritual control, if either of the quorums of the established order might be lost to the economy of the church by death or defection of either one of the important component parts of the three-fold cord, constituted by the unity of the Presidency, Twelve, and Seventy."

This statement evidences the authority and the responsibility held by the high priest's office. Would it not be reasonable to consider that a council of high priests elected by the body of high priests from a church in an obvious emergency situation would have authority to act in such circumstance? Furthermore, when such a council of high priests has been upheld by a body of Melchisedec priesthood by a unanimous vote of the Elders in Assembly, does that not constitute authority? If a General Conference of the members should also vote to approve such interim leadership, would that not constitute a valid authority?

It is to be understood that when disorder occurs in the church during times when a legal, authoritative quorum structure of the church still functions, it is then the duty of the several quorums, or any one of them, to take measures to correct it, seeking the advice and direction of the leading quorums of the church. (Presidency, Twelve, and Seventy) These several quorums identified in Section 122 who were counseled to correct such disorder could be any quorum of the Melchisedec priesthood. Quorums exist only in organized church structure, that is, when Presidency exists.

The church was told in the "Blackgum Experience" of September 4, 1994, that *"I, the Lord, say unto you, that those men of the institutional church who have violated mine ordinances and sacraments have lost their authority...."* Since the leading quorums of the RLDS Church have promoted the changes in the ordinances and sacraments that have been witnessed in the institutional church, they have lost their authority, and although they exist in that body, they have no divine authority and cease to have Godly sanction. Consequently, there is no quorum structure that can legally exist and resultantly, there are no leading quorums from which advice and direction may be received. This creates a case of emergency, no quorum structure for the correction of disorder, and no leading authority from which to seek advice and direction.

The Lord in his infinite wisdom has provided the mechanism for correction in such emergency, *"or a council of high priests, in the case of emergency."* The Lord further indicates how such corrections are to be administered: *"The Scriptures and the church articles and covenants, with the rules adopted by the church, shall govern in procedure."* (D&C 122:10) Further, 104:7 states *"The high priest and elder are to administer in spiritual things, agreeably to the covenants and commandments of the church; and they have a right to officiate in all these offices of the church when there are no higher authorities present."* The situation exists now and has for several years, that there are no higher authorities present.

Is it not reasonable, and in wisdom, that action be taken to correct disorder in the church? Is not instruction already given as to how to proceed and what procedures and principles shall govern in the correction of disorder? The answer is **YES!**

In April of 1829 Oliver Cowdery was counseled as follows *"I say unto you, that you must study it out in your mind; then you must ask me if it be right, and if it*

is right, I will cause that your bosom shall burn within you; therefore, you shall feel that it is right; but if it be not right, you shall have no such feelings, but you shall have a stupor of thought, that shall cause you to forget the thing which is wrong;" (D&C 9:3a-d) The men who brought forth the Proclamation not only spent much time in prayer and fasting in their study, but also bear witness by their testimony that the test Oliver Cowdery was counseled to apply has been taken. They have not forgotten, but rather their hearts burn within them. They bear witness to all through their words that the Proclamation was divinely inspired. To their testimony now nearly 130 Melchisedec men have added their signatures to the Proclamation.

Joseph Smith III said (C.H., Vol. 5, p. 349), "The ground occupied by the church has been; what God clearly commands must be done; what the Spirit confirms, though it might be dictated by human wisdom, that is correct." Brother Joseph also referred to Paul's words (Gal. 3:15) *"Though it be but a man's covenant, yet when it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto."*

It is submitted, for your consideration, that two of the criteria for authority have already been established. Firstly, the Proclamation affirms command from God and therefore authority on the first level. Secondly, the high priests have acted in response to what is considered instruction given in the law (D&C 122:10) which is the second attribute of authority. And lastly, the process has begun wherein the body gives its assent to the proposed leadership and authority.

All should be reminded of the counsel given in Section 85:22-23b *"Behold I sent you out to testify and warn the people, and it becometh every man who hath been warned, to warn his neighbor; therefore, they are left without excuse, and their sins are upon their own heads. He that seeketh me early shall find me, and shall not be forsaken. Therefore, tarry ye, and labor diligently, that you may be perfected in your ministry, to go forth among the Gentiles for the last time, and as many as the mouth of the Lord shall name, to bind up the law, and seal up the testimony, and to prepare the saints for the hour of judgment, which is to come; that their souls may escape the wrath of God, the desolation of abomination, which await the wicked, both in this world, and the world to come;"* The law has been broken, disorder abounds, and pollution of the ordinances is occurring. Surely there are those whose office and calling gives them authority to bind up the law. When bones of our body are broken we waste no time to get them set in proper order and alignment – we bind them up! The testimony is waning among the people who have been called in these last days to establish Zion. There must be an authoritative body of priesthood who can seal up the testimony, prevent the erosion, restore it to original strength and beyond – that the testimony may go forth in beauty and in power.

The revelation given as the Preface to the Book of Commandments and known as Section 1 of our Doctrine and Covenants reminds us *"I the Lord cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance;"* (D&C 1:5) Though men may choose to make allowances for sin, God cannot. When the law is ignored or broken, then disorder prevails. When disorder prevails, the Spirit withdraws. Let each of us make careful analysis of the spiritual condition of the Church today. Be reminded *"He that repents and does the commandments of the Lord shall be forgiven; and he that repents not, from him shall be taken even the light which he has received, for my Spirit shall not always strive with man, saith the Lord of Hosts."* (D&C 1:5f,g) It is the Spirit that gives light, life, and truth to the Church, collectively and individually.

May we remember the words of the saints from another time who, in similar circumstances, stood forth boldly to bind up the law and to seal up the testimony. For *"the wicked shall be a ransom for the righteous,"* (Proverbs 21: 18); and to such as shall have escaped after learning the wiles of Satan will be given power to bind up the law, and seal the testimony, and shall stand as saviors upon Mount Zion; when the day of transfiguration shall come. "Let every man stand in his own office, and labor in his own calling, not doubting the result of that labor, nor the authority of that calling; for by the keys which have been given, shall Israel be led. For they have come down from the fathers. *And for the last time* (D&C 105:12a) and not withstanding those to whom this power has been given are scattered abroad, they that remain and are pure in heart, shall as lively stones seek their places in the building without the sound of a hammer; (or murmur) for, though her walls may be built in troublous times, the arms of her hands shall be made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob, Therefore, fear not nor be discouraged; let the Elders minister in the law with pure hearts and clean hands, and let all the Saints come before the Lord with confession, and supplication, and that which is promised shall surely come to pass, even the salvation of Israel and the redemption of Zion." (A Word of Consolation to the Scattered Saints dated October 6, 1852)

Council of High Priests
P. O. Box 339
Blue Spring, MO 64013

August 9, 1999

Dear Brethren,

In the spirit of prayer and preparation, and in recognition of present conditions in the church, and in response to their lawful role (D. and C. 122:10a, 104:5-6, 120:2-3), twenty-four (24) High Priests gathered on Saturday, July 17, 1999, to take formal action regarding "A Proclamation and Invitation to the Faithful." The three main items of business were: 1) Acceptance or rejection of the "Proclamation," 2) Acceptance or rejection of the seven procedural steps in the "Proclamation," and 3) The election of a chairman, approval of counselors, and election of nine additional Council members.

After a morning of prayer, extensive discussion, many questions, answers, and confirming testimonies the High Priests agreed to approve the "Proclamation" with its seven procedural steps and proceed accordingly (23-1). Brother V. Lee Killpack was elected chairman; two counselors were approved – Roger Gault and Jim Rogers; and, nine additional Council members were elected – Jack Basse, David Bowerman, Albert Burdick, Lane Harold, W. Dale Miller, Joe Ben Stone, Harold (Bud) Tims, Carl VunCannon, Jr., and Melvin Zahner.

> In the same Spirit which has directed the preceding actions an invitation is now extended to all Melchisedec men who support, in principle the "Proclamation" and its seven points – **to attend an assembly on Saturday, October 30, 1999, at the Blue Springs Restoration Branch, from 9:00 AM till 4:00 PM.** This assembly will formalize the planning of a Conference on April 8-9, 2000. The spring Conference will bring together all qualified members to act upon the decisions of the Elders in the October session.

It is noteworthy that ten years ago the High Priest Assembly began discussion of a similar action. Five years ago a group called the Center Place Prayer and Study Group began meeting and it was within this group of Melchisedec men that the foundation for these procedural steps took form. The letter of "Proclamation" was drafted and taken to the High Priests who acted as outlined above.

The Council of High Priests are compelled by the Spirit to heed the wisdom of Joseph Smith III's counsel contained in "The Letter of Instruction" (C.H., Vol. 6, p. 571) in the event of emergency in the Church.

> "...the Church is justified in pursuing that course which is to it justified by the spirit of wisdom and revelation." And – "...the Church is justified in doing that which is necessary to be done by the wisdom that may be given it at the time such work is to be done."

Brothers, the Spirit pleads with all that have made valid covenants in baptism and ordination to respond in this great day of choosing. May the Spirit invite your preparations to attend, and your careful, prayerful consideration of the present condition and needs of the Church and the calling of the saints to be "one." Let us come together in faithful trust of the Holy Spirit.

In Gospel Bonds,
THE COUNCIL OF HIGH PRIESTS

V. Lee Killpack

V. Lee Killpack, Chairman

Attachments

MELCHISEDEC ASSEMBLY
OCTOBER 30, 1999

SCHEDULE

8:00	- 9:00	A.M.	Registration
9:00	- 9:45		Worship and Prayer
9:45	- 10:00		Break
10:00	- 12:00		First Business Session
12:00	- 1:00	P.M.	Lunch
1:00	- 3:00		Second Business Session
3:00	- 3:15		Break
3:15	- 4:30		Third Business Session (if needed) and closing Worship

PROPOSED AGENDA

1. Election of a Chairman for the Assembly
2. Election of a Secretary for the Assembly
3. Sustain the Credentials Committee
4. Receive Report of Credentials Committee
5. Presentation of the "Proclamation"
6. Motion to Approve the "Proclamation"
   - action
7. Motion to Accept Temporary Leadership of a Council of High Priests
   - action
8. Motion to Accept Council of High Priests as Elected by the Body of High Priests
   - action
9. Motion to Accept Recommendation of the Name, Remnant Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints
   - action
10. Motion to Call for a Conference of the Members on April 8-9, 2000
    - action
11. Motion to Accept a Proposed Agenda for the Spring Conference
    - action
12. Receive the Treasurer's Report
13. Sustain Interim Treasurer and Historian
14. Sustain Temporary Publications Committee
15. Other Business
16. Adjourn

123 Registered Elders

MELCHISEDEC ASSEMBLY
October 30, 1999
Blue Springs, MO

Minutes

Presiding – V. Lee Killpack.
Called to Order – 10:00 AM.
Scripture Reading – D&C 41:1; 43:3.
Hymn – No. 153.
Invocation – James Rogers.

Election of the Chairman for the Assembly –

- The Chair was relinquished to James Rogers to receive nominations for the Assembly Chairman.
- It was moved by David Bowerman, received a second, to elect, by acclamation, V. Lee Killpack as the Assembly Chairman. **Carried unanimously.**

Brother Killpack resumed his place as Chairman.

Election of the Secretary for the Assembly –
Nomination – Roger Gault. **Carried unanimously.**

Sustaining of the Credentials Committee –
Moved by Dale Miller, received a second, to sustain the Credentials Committee (Steve Church, Chairman, William Derr, Jake Simmons, and Richard Wilson). **Carried unanimously.**

Receive the Report of the Credentials Committee –
It was moved by Robert Ostrander, received a second, to accept the Credentials Committee report with the addition of the following:

Reginald Bowerman	Eldon Kastl	Ronnie Rogers
Robert L. Eppers	Elvin Kettlewell	Rick Scott
Vernon F. Darling	Ray L. Love	Wesley L. Townsend
Maurice A. Gibler	Gregory G. Lyons	Carl VunCannon, III
Lewis Herbst	Frederick J. Moore	

Carried unanimously.

Presentation of the Proclamation –
Chairman, V. Lee Killpack, presented a brief historical statement regarding the "Proclamation."

It was moved by Fred Larsen, seconded by Warren Chelline, to approve "The Proclamation and Invitation to the Faithful." **Carried unanimously.**

It was moved by Sam Dyer, seconded by Robert Hall, to accept the temporary leadership of "A Council of High Priests." **Carried unanimously.**

It was moved by Greg Turner, seconded by Dan Gough, to accept "A Council of High Priests" as elected by the body of High Priests – July 17, 1999. It was requested that the names of the "Council" be added to the motion. (V. Lee Killpack, Chairman; Roger Gault and James Rogers, counselors; Jack Basse, David Bowerman, Albert Burdick, Lane Harold, Dale Miller, Joe Ben Stone, Harold "Bud" Tims, Carl VunCannon, Jr., and Melvin Zahner) **Carried unanimously.**

It was moved by Dan Gough, seconded by Steve Church, to accept the recommended name "Remnant Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints." **Carried unanimously.**

It was moved by Carl VunCannon, Jr., seconded by Jack Basse, to call for a "Conference of the Members" on April 8-9, 2000. **Carried unanimously.**

It was moved by James Buchman, seconded by Richard Wilson, to accept the "Proposed Agenda" for the April 8-9, 2000 conference. **Carried unanimously.**

It was moved by Robert Hall, seconded by John Reed, to receive the Treasurer's Report. **Carried unanimously.**

It was moved by Rick Scott, seconded by David Bowerman, to sustain Albert Burdick as the Interim Treasurer. **Carried unanimously.**

It was moved by Robert Eppers, seconded by Mike Rogers, to sustain Raymond Clough as the Interim Historian. **Carried unanimously.**

It was moved by Jack Basse, seconded by Dwayne Davis, to sustain the "Temporary Publications Committee" (Tom Beil, Ray Clough, Lane Harold and Marjorie Spease). **Carried unanimously.**

Several of the brethren shared their testimonies of support and indicated the direction of the Holy Spirit in their acceptance of the "Proclamation."

The Chairman expressed his appreciation to the Blue Springs Restoration Branch for the use of their fine facilities and to the Blue Springs Deacons for their assistance; to the patriarchs for their leadership in the worship; to the ladies who handled the registration and the lunch; to the saints who remembered the Assembly in their prayers and to this body assembled for their commitment.

The Chairman asked the members of the "Council of High Priests" to stand – he then gave an invitation to the body to stand shoulder to shoulder with these men. A closing scripture was read by V. Lee Killpack – after which hymn 256 was sung.

The closing worship was led by the Patriarchs – the closing prayer was offered by Eldon Kastl. A prayer of blessing on the noon meal was offered by Morton Hampton.

Adjourned – 12:00 noon.

Resolution on Basic Beliefs

By direction of the same Spirit that led the Prophet Joseph Smith, Jr. and others, to restore the fullness of the Gospel in 1830, and to retrieve it following disruption and martyrdom, by means of reorganization during the 1852-1860 period, we the Saints now assembled on the 8th day of April, in the year of our Lord 2000, do now again reaffirm our faith in the great Restoration cause. We solemnly extend the call to all those who cherish that faith to unite once again in the movement to renew and restore that which has been lost or abandoned in our day. In so doing, we bear witness to the power of God in guiding and directing a faithful remnant to proclaim and defend the ancient faith.

As a foundation upon which to move forward we hereby adopt the following resolutions of faith and doctrine:

1. We believe that the Church of Jesus Christ as organized April 6, 1830 continues to exist, though in limited form, wherever there are faithful priesthood and members adhering to the pattern set forth in the Doctrine and Covenants. (Church History, Vol. 3, pp. 209-210)

2. We further believe and hereby declare that we have no intention, nor is there any requirement to organize a "new church," for we like those who labored for reorganization are acting as members and officers of the original Church, regulating and setting in order, in harmony with the laws already given, endeavoring only to unify and shepherd the faithful, and preparing ourselves to be worthy of and receptive to further divine guidance. (C.H., Vol. 3, pp. 211; Joseph Smith III, C.H., Vol. 5, "Foundations of Reorganization," pp. 345-355; Israel A. Smith, *Saints Herald*, Conference Daily, March 31, 1952.)

3. The Three Standard Books of Scriptures (C.H., Vol. 3, pp. 210; D&C 122:10c)
   Inspired Version of the Bible
   Book of Mormon (1908 Edition)
   Doctrine and Covenants (through Sections 144)
   In connection with the D&C, please reference GCR 368; D&C 27:4c; 42:5; and 122:10c. Further, the position adopted by the April 1886 General Conference (GCR 308) will guide and inform our position on all matters therein set forth. With regard to the status of sections added after October, 1958, they shall be considered as generally fitting the guidance given in Section 88 regarding the Apocrypha, or until further direction may be given through a future Prophet and President of the High Priesthood of the Church.

4. Epitome of Faith (C.H., Vol. 2, pp. 569-570, from *Times and Seasons,* Vol. 3, pp. 709-710)

5. Rules and Resolutions. Until such time as a careful review for outdated, or no longer applicable actions may be required, or prophetic guidance shall direct, the Resolutions adopted at the 1852 Conference (C.H., Vol. 3, pp. 209-210) shall be included with those contained in the Book of Rules and Resolutions up to and concluding with the General Conference of 1964.

Referencing the counsel of Joseph Smith III (C.H., Vol. 3, pp. 716) and by adoption of the foregoing fundamental doctrinal tenets of the Restored Gospel, we now give formal approval to the Remnant Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints as a true and legitimate succession of the organization of April 1830, and reorganization over a period of years extending from essentially 1852 to 1860. We further proclaim the Church may now legally become one. Every legitimate member and branch, or group, at its farthest outposts may have legal unity with

every other member and branch under the leadership of those sustained by the body in General Conference. By declaring this action and extending this proclamation, we understand that legal unity must be based on and unalterably committed to upholding and abiding by the spiritual laws as found in said Scriptures, Articles and Covenants, and the Rules and Resolutions we now reaffirm. It now remains the privilege and duty of the faithful remnant to avail themselves of the blessings and the commandments promised to, as well as the conduct required of, all true Latter Day Saints.

To this end, we hereby finally resolve that we will, to the extent of our ability and means, communicate to all the scattered Saints the sentiments contained in the foregoing resolutions, and declare it to be the duty of the Elders of the Church to cry repentance to this generation, through obedience to the Gospel as revealed in the Scriptures, and not faint in the discharge of duty (C.H., Vol. 3, pp. 210).

REFERENCES CITED IN RESOLUTION ON BASIC BELIEFS

CHURCH HISTORY, VOL. 3, PP. 209-210

"Resolved, that this conference regard the pretensions of Brigham Young, James J. Strang, James Colin Brewster, and William Smith and Joseph Wood's joint claims to leadership of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, as an assumption of power, in violation of the law of God, and consequently we disclaim all connection and fellowship with them.

"Resolved, that the successor of Joseph Smith, Junior, as the Presiding High Priest in the Melchisedec Priesthood, must of necessity be the seed of Joseph Smith, Junior, in fulfillment of the law and promises of God.

"Resolved, that, as the office of First President of the Church grows out of the authority of the Presiding High Priest, in the high priesthood, no person can legally lay claim to the office of First President of the Church without a previous ordination to the Presidency of the High Priesthood.

"Resolved, that we recognize the validity of all legal ordinations in this church, and will fellowship all such as have been ordained while acting within the purview of such authority.

"Resolved, that we believe that the Church of Jesus Christ, organized on the sixth day of April, A. D., 1830, exists as on that day wherever six or more saints are organized according to the pattern in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants.

"Resolved, that the whole law of the Church of Jesus Christ is contained in the Bible, Book of Mormon, and Book of Doctrine and Covenants.

"Resolved, that, in the opinion of this conference, there is no stake to which the saints on this continent are commanded to gather at the present time, but that the saints on all other lands are commanded to gather to this land preparatory to the reestablishment of the church in Zion, when the scattered saints on this land will also be commanded to gather and return to Zion, and to their inheritances, in fulfillment of the promises of God; and it is the duty of the saints to turn their hearts and their faces towards Zion and supplicate the Lord for such deliverance.

"Resolved, that we will, to the extent of our ability and means, communicate to all the scattered saints the sentiments contained in the foregoing resolutions.

"Resolved, that this conference believe it the duty of the elders of the church, who have been legally ordained, to cry repentance and remission of sins to this generation, through obedience to the gospel as revealed in the record of the Jews, the Book of Mormon, and Book of Doctrine and Covenants, and not to faint in the discharge of duty."

CHURCH HISTORY VOL. 3, PP. 211

"There was no intention at this time of organizing a new church, but these men were acting as members and officers of the original church, regulating and setting in order the church, according to the law, as they understood it, and in harmony with instruction given to them."

JOSEPH SMITH III, C. H. VOL. 5, "FOUNDATIONS OF REORGANIZATION," PP. 345-355

"Third, To whom belonged the duty of reorganizing these elements?

"Clearly to that portion of them that remained within the rule of faith and practice, given of God to govern the body when organized; or to such portion as may have once left that rule, and had returned thereto.

"Fourth, The question, Where was the Church during the lapse of time between the disorganization and the reorganization?

It was with the remnant scattered abroad, who remained true to the principles first given as the gospel of Christ; and with any body of such remnant, numbering six or more, under the pastoral charge of an elder, priest, teacher, or deacon."

"A command of God to do anything always conveys the right to do it, and guarantees to those commanded the powers necessary to carry into effect the command; hence, the command originally given to organize the church, conveyed the right, and vouchsafed the necessary power to do it."

"This conveys to us, clearly, that if the Melchisedec priesthood is present in any of its offices, the right to organize, or to reorganize; the power to establish, build up, and confirm all the church are there; and, if directed by command of God, to perform all the work necessary."

"The ground occupied by the church has been; what God clearly commands must be done; what the Spirit confirms, though it might be dictated by human wisdom, that is correct. 'Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto.'" (Gal. 3:15)

"Here, as in 1830, the elements from which the Church was created, existed; here, as then, commandment guaranteed authority; the channels of manifestation existed, priesthood having already been conferred, the right to act was given and the duty of the priesthood made clear. The charter of their Christian liberty was declared to be the law which had been accepted by the whole Church in solemn assembly, and each and every claim not in harmony and keeping with that charter were denied. The result of constant adhesion to that line of policy, that rule of conduct, faith and practice is clearly seen."

"...But so far as delegated authority from God makes priesthood, the priesthood right to act in the name of the Church as ministers for Christ, remained with the faithful elder, priest, teacher and deacon, who had not bowed to Baal, nor spotted his garments with unholy lust. And if there had been no more than a Joshua, the son of Nun, and a Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, there would have been enough; but as there were more, there were more than enough."

"The men properly received into the Church prior to 1844, who present themselves to the Reorganization for identification with that body, are only asked to verify their original reception, and state their desire for affiliation; these are held to justify their reception and fellowship. The position they occupied, within the rule of organization provided for in the law, is accorded to them as of right, upon a proper confession of faith."

ISRAEL A. SMITH, *SAINTS HERALD*, CONFERENCE DAILY, MARCH 31, 1952

See citation of this reference in "The Proclamation and Invitation to the Faithful."

DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS 122:10c

"The Scriptures and the church articles and covenants, with the rules adopted by the church, shall govern in procedure."

GCR 368

"Resolved, That we recognize the Bible, Book of Mormon, and Doctrine and Covenants as the only standard works of the church; and it is our opinion that every other book, pamphlet, or other publication should simply rest upon its own merits, the church being responsible only for that which it authorized to be done, or which it accepts after it is done."

DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS 27:4c

"Neither shall anything be appointed unto any of this church contrary to the church covenants, for all things must be done in order and by common consent in the church, by the prayer of faith."

DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS 42:5

"And again, the elders, priests, and teachers of this church shall teach the principles of my gospel which are in the Bible and the Book of Mormon, in which is the fullness of the gospel;

and they shall observe the covenants and church articles to do them, and these shall be their teachings, as they shall be directed by the Spirit; and the Spirit shall be given unto you by the prayer of faith, and if ye receive not the Spirit ye shall not teach.

And all this ye shall observe to do as I have commanded concerning your teaching, until the fullness of my Scriptures is given.

And as ye shall lift up your voices by the Comforter, ye shall speak and prophesy as seemeth me good; for, behold, the Comforter knoweth all things, and beareth record of the Father and of the Son."

GCR 308

(1) That the presentation of individual opinions by elders, or others of the body, such opinions not having been affirmed by the body as a rule of faith or practice, does not make them a part of the faith or belief of the body; but relate to us individually upon the issue of toleration, which toleration, we believe as was manifested in the action of Jesus while dealing with men here in his ministry, should be so broad as to make no occasion for persons to wish to withdraw from the body by reason of these individual differences of opinion.

(2) That we know of no temple building, except as edifices wherein to worship God, and no endowment except the endowment of the Holy Spirit of the kind experienced by the early saints on Pentacost Day.

(3) That "baptism for the dead" belongs to those local questions of which the body has said by resolution: "That the commandments of a local character, given to the first organization of the church, are binding on the Reorganization only so far as they are either reiterated or referred to as binding by commandments to this

church." And that principle has neither been reiterated nor referred to as a commandment.

(4) That tithing is a law applicable to the church in the sense set forth by the Savior in the sixteenth chapter of the Gospel recorded by Luke, that we are stewards of our heavenly father so far as the riches of this world are concerned, and that as such we should render an account of our stewardship here; the rendition is in all cases, however, necessarily voluntary on the part of the member complying with the law.

(5) That we know of no "consecration" by which individuals are made legal heirs to the kingdom of God, or church of Christ, when the rewards are apportioned; except that of a life consecrated to the service of the Master as ordained in his word together with the consecration of properties for the aid of the poor, preaching of the gospel and establishment of the said kingdom, as a member of the same has so to impart.

(6) That the sole mouthpiece of the church is Jesus Christ. We are to receive commandments as a church only as Christ communicates the same; and we are entitled, as a church, to be first satisfied that Christ did give any commandment purporting to come from him, before accepting, or receiving, the same.

(7) That "plenary inspiration" has never been affirmed by the church; but we believe in the so named "authorized" books of the church as true and proper standards of evidence in the determination of all controverted doctrines in theology.

(8) That the doctrine of "cursing' and "avenging enemies," we accept only as explained in paragraph 3 and 4 of Section 102, Doctrine and Covenants, the section referred to by the brethren, wherein the Lord is made the sole executor in behalf of the children of Zion as follows...

(9) That we believe in an "imperial dynasty" only, wherein Christ is to be King, and the reigning of such of his servants who keep the faith here with him when he shall come with his rewards...

EPITOME OF FAITH (CHURCH HISTORY, VOL. 2, PP. 569-570)

We believe that men will be punished for their own sins, and not for Adam's transgression.

We believe that through the atonement of Christ all mankind may be saved by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel.

We believe that these ordinances are, 1st, Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; 2nd, Repentance; 3rd, Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; 4th, Laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost.

We believe that a man must be called of God by "prophecy, and by laying on of hands" by those who are in authority to preach the gospel and administer in the ordinances thereof.

We believe in the same organization that existed in the primitive church; viz.: Apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, evangelists, etc.

We believe in the gift of tongues, prophecy, revelation, visions, healing, interpretation of tongues, etc.

We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly; we also believe the Book of Mormon to be the word of God.

We believe all that God has revealed, all that he does now reveal, and we believe that he will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

We believe in the literal gathering of Israel and in the restoration of the Ten Tribes. That Zion will be built upon this continent. That Christ will reign personally upon the earth, and that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisaic glory.

We claim the privilege of worshiping Almighty God according to the dictates of our conscience, and allow all men the same privilege, let them worship how, where, or what they may.

We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying, honoring, and sustaining the law.

We believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, virtuous, and in doing good to *all men*; indeed we may say that we follow the admonition of Paul, "we believe all things, we hope all things," we have endured many things, and hope to be able to endure all things. If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things. Respectfully, etc.,

JOSEPH SMITH

JOSEPH SMITH III (CHURCH HISTORY, VOL. 3, PP. 716)

"The church is now *legally* one, every branch of it has a legal unity with every other branch; and that legal unity is, as we understand it, in accordance with the spiritual law given to the church for its guidance, found in the Book of Covenants. It now remains for us to avail ourselves of that legal oneness to the enhancement of our spiritual unity and the advancement of our spiritual interests."

"Is there anything stronger than *truth*, the truth; God's word, the word; the word which giveth life? He then that abideth in the word, the truth, is strong-'mighty and strong.'"

"In the unity of the truth there is strength. This unity of truth is only to be found developed and developing where men say, 'I am *desirous* and *willing*,' and are performing."

"We shall be glad to take the hand in fraternal regard the men who will now begin to work practically for Zion's good; helping each other, thus by concentration and unity, forming a band mighty and strong. So shall we be spiritually one as we are now legally one." ■

MY TESTIMONY – APRIL 12, 2000

By V. Lee Killpack

As with many of you, much of my time before the Lord has been focused in asking Him for guidance as to the next step that is to be taken in the renewing and restoring process of His Church. In January of this year indications that I have learned to be the working of the Holy Spirit began to enter my conscious thought. I was made aware that three (3) men of the patriarchal order should be chosen to serve as a committee to select seven (7) men to be called and ordained as apostles. The names of C. Houston Hobart, E. D. "Dan" Gough, and Conrad R. Faulk were given. In my search for added witness, I indicated to a brother of the Council of High Priests that I felt light was being received. Without divulging the specifics of the light received, I indicated to him that I felt the Patriarchs were to have a role in the renewal process. His response was guarded, and in my uncertainty at the time took it to be negative, and so the thoughts were suppressed for a time.

On the evening of January 24, 2000, when the Council of High Priests met to petition the Lord for guidance, a message was received that said in part:

"Remember, My Servants, to heed the admonition given you through one of your number several years ago, and hear again the counsel to move with careful steps. But if you will be my servants you must move forward in faith, seeking always by study and earnest prayer for that light which I will send to enlighten your way. And if you will endure patiently and resolutely the trials which in my love and wisdom I have allowed, and will continue to allow to test you and refine you, then My promises which have so long been prophesied shall be more speedily fulfilled."

I had been undergoing a trial and there was promise to me in that statement, that the Lord would enlighten our minds if we were faithful.

On February 28, 2000, a message was brought to the Council of High Priests, which said in part:

"I would say unto you each and all, I have counseled you and directed you to proceed step by step as you have moved in faith...you are to proceed to make ready for the fulfilling of My commandment to bring order to My Church. The pattern and the law given by Me in years past is to be used by you in this day also."

This was to me further intimation that the Lord was preparing us for further light.

On March 12, 2000, I was awakened in the early hours of the morning with expressions of light, which I thought were to be given to the Center Place Prayer and Study Group that afternoon, but was not given. The undelivered message was as follows:

"My sons and daughters, you stand at the threshold of a new day of opportunity to redeem My Zion. In but a few days if you do not faint, My Church will be renewed and restored. It is granted unto you this last opportunity. Be patient and in my own time I will provide again one who is mighty and strong to be your President, Prophet, Seer, and Revelator. Until such time, organize according to the pattern I have given you. I will bless you with wisdom in its time and blessings appropriate to your needs. Do not faint in the days of your trial nor in the discharge of the duty entrusted to you My Remnant. I will be with you and sustain you."

On the afternoon of March 23, 2000, the brother whom I had spoken to in January came and suggested that he felt three of the patriarchs should be chosen a committee by the April conference to select seven men to serve as apostles. He named the three who had been earlier received.

My heart leaped with the confirmation of that which I had received in January. Strengthened by the testimony of an added witness, I could not sleep that evening as the Lord filled my mind with light, nor could I rest until the message had been written. After the message had been put into printed form I again waited for further confirmation that what had been given was timely.

On Sunday morning March 26, 2000, I attended the Blue Springs Restoration Branch and listened as Brother Carl Vun-Cannon, Jr. taught the adult church school class. He spoke for several minutes challenging the class with the thought—are we prepared to "trust the Holy Spirit." His words spoke to me personally-did I trust what the Holy Spirit had given? I had received the message and had confirming witness and it was now time to act. I testify to all that wish to hear-the message received is of God and is His will for the guidance and direction of His Church.

Humbly, V. Lee Killpack

Inspired Message - General Conference - April 8-9, 2000

(To the Conference Assembled - Received March 23rd, 2000)

In response to the Holy Spirit, which speaks by way of wisdom and by revelation, I present to the Council of High Priests and to the Conference convening April 8, 2000, the following direction to the faithful waiting Remnant:

> "It is My will that the next step is now to be taken by those who have heard My Spirit's voice in The Proclamation and Invitation to the Faithful.
>
> "Let My faithful servants C. Houston Hobart, E. D. "Dan" Gough, and Conrad R. Faulk of the patriarchal order be appointed a committee of three (3) and charged by the Conference assembled to engage in a season of sustained prayer and fasting to select (7) men who shall be ordained as apostles in My Church.
>
> "Let a Conference be convened on September 23rd, 2000, to approve by its voice the calling and ordination of those so selected.
>
> "If the Church will sustain through their diligent prayer these three (3) in their charge and the Council of High Priests who are to continue in interim leadership of My Church until said Conference, it shall be sustained by My Holy Spirit and as I have said in former counsel, with commandments not a few, and revelations in their time.
>
> "Be faithful little flock, and in My time I will send you one mighty and strong, again, to be your President, Prophet, Seer, and Revelator."

Humbly,

V. Lee Killpack, Chairman
The Council of High Priests

GENERAL CONFERENCE REPORT
September 23, 2000

In accordance with the direction of the Holy Spirit and consistent with the request and instruction of the General Conference of April 8, 2000 to select seven men who shall be set apart to serve as Apostles in the Church of Jesus Christ, known among men as the Remnant Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, we, the undersigned, hereby present our report to this General Conference of the Saints gathered on September 23, 2000.

The task placed upon us is one that we understood to be beyond our capabilities to perform without divine guidance. It has been, and is, our desire to respond faithfully and in a manner pleasing to the Lord, and to be used as instruments in His hands. We have put forth our best efforts in response to the assignment given to us and have engaged in prayer and fasting in order to be led by the Spirit of Inspiration. Also, we are aware that many of the Saints, both near and far, have supported us through their own prayers and fasting and we are greatly appreciative of their support.

We have earnestly sought that guidance and direction which would come from our Heavenly Father in whatever form or manner He might choose to provide it. We believe that, in spite of our weakness and frailty, He has blessed us and has directed our thoughts and actions in order that His people will be blessed and that His Church might once again be set in order.

The Spirit of Wisdom directs that we offer these words of advice and counsel to those in Conference who will lead and those who will follow. The responsibilities that must be accepted by these chosen men are onerous and will require dedication in their personal and corporate lives.

The Lord has said that those who are His Apostles must ***"desire to take upon them my name, with full purpose of heart,"*** [D&C 16:5b] and they ***"must walk uprightly before me and sin not."*** [D&C 16:5d] Also, the Lord has said that His Apostles must have and develop qualities that will be characteristic of their lives which will demonstrate that they will work together harmoniously and in humility, and that their decisions will ***"be made in all righteousness, in holiness and lowliness of heart, meekness and long-suffering, and in faith and virtue and knowledge; temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity..."*** [D&C 104:11i] These are some of the standards of their calling. It will require uncommon men to live up to them and to apply themselves to their great task with unreserved devotion.

Under the law of the Church, and in the current circumstances, it is the duty of the men called and chosen to be Apostles to once again set the Church in order, to administer its affairs at this time, and to watch over the Church. This will require at the beginning that twelve men be called and set apart to constitute a Standing High Council as the judicial arm of the Church. Further, it will be necessary that procedures be established for the recording of ordinances performed throughout the Church, including Blessings, Baptisms, Marriages and Ordinations.

In the normal course of their duties and in accordance with lawful procedures of the Church consistent with the Scriptures and the Rules and Resolutions, it is the responsibility of the Apostles to set proper and orderly procedures for calling and ordaining men to the various offices of the Priesthood. It is their responsibility to pursue the propagation of the gospel and the gathering, to ordain and to direct the Seventy, and to ordain evangelical ministers.

That which is being asked of these men will be life-consuming and will require a new level of dedication even in view of the considerable contributions already made by them. We solicit the constant, prayerful support by all of the Saints for these men in their calling and the fulfilling of their responsibilities.

We recommend that the following men should be set apart as Members of the Quorum of Twelve of the Remnant Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints: Gary L. Argotsinger, David W. Bowerman, P. James Buchman, Steve R. Church, V. Lee Killpack, Robert E. Ostrander, and James L. Rogers. Each of these men has indicated his willingness to serve to the best of his ability.

In response to the leading of the Holy Spirit, we hereby submit this report for consideration by the Conference.
Respectfully Submitted:
C. Houston Hobart, E. D. (Dan) Gough, and Conrad R. Faulk.

⌑ ⌑ ⌑

Brother Conrad Faulk on behalf of the three Patriarchs, seconded by James Watkins, moved the acceptance of this Report and the authorization by this body for the Chairman to proceed with steps necessary for the ordination of the men named.

The Chairman, because he was named in the Report, asked High Priest Jack Basse to take the Chair for the discussion and action of the body with respect to the motion.

Each of the seven men named was given opportunity to make statements to the Conference. After confirming testimonies by the Conference each man was unanimously approved followed by a standing unanimous vote to approve the main motion.

The Conference engaged in a period of meditation as arrangements were made for an ordination service to follow with the Patriarchs presiding. Evangelist/Patriarch C. Houston Hobart delivered the following charge to the ordinands

CHARGE TO THE ORDINANDS

Brethren, you are called to be special witnesses of the divinity of our Lord. As such you will preach the gospel and perform all the ordinances of the Church which Elders are to observe. You come from different walks of life. Your experiences of ministry in the Church are not the same. Yet the Lord has called you to occupy the same office in his priesthood. You are to be Apostles. You are of equal worth in the sight of God. Because that is so, none of you should strive for mastery over the others. Each one of you will have the same authority.

This is a unique time in the history of the Restoration. Upon you will rest an awesome responsibility. In the absence of a President of the High Priesthood, your duties will be more extensive than they would be normally. Enter into your new office with zeal tempered by wisdom. Do not try to do all things at once. Always rely upon the Holy Spirit for direction. Determine now to seek the Lord's will in all matters. May you ***"be of the same mind one toward another."*** [Rom. 12:16] Never allow differences to cause a division or lasting disagreement in your group.

Each one of you has declared a willingness to serve the Lord as an Apostle. As the Lord's men you are called to bear his name among all people, beginning with the Church. At some future time your ministry may broaden to include others in the nation and some beyond its borders. Hold yourselves in readiness to do whatever is required to promote growth in the Church both numerically and spiritually.

As the Lord has said, ***"Thou shalt take the things which thou hast received, which have been given unto thee in my Scriptures for a law, to be my law, to govern my church."*** [D&C 42:16a] You have the responsibility ***"to teach every person who belongs to this church...to keep all the commandments and covenants of the church"*** [D&C 42:21a] in addition to observing the ***"articles and...rules adopted by the Church."*** [D&C 122:10c] Unless this is done, the Church will not enjoy the blessings which follow obedience.

You have the honor of being trusted by the Lord to accomplish all that is required to begin the tremendous task of setting the Church in order. No others can do this. Others will support you, but the initiative rests with you. However, you need not feel that all which lies before you to be done can be achieved by your own knowledge and power. The Lord does not expect that of you, but he has promised, ***"I will move upon those men; I will give them wisdom, I will give them strength and bind them together with the force of love for me, and for you, and those who do not know me. And...they shall move to bring into being once more those officers whereby the Church can function as the body is intended to function."*** [Inspired message, June 2000, Wilburton reunion]

As High Priests, you ***"are to administer in spiritual things, agreeably to the covenants and commandments of the Church."*** [D&C 104:7] With you rests ***"the power and authority...to hold the keys of spiritual blessings of the Church; to have the privilege of receiving the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven; to have the heavens opened unto you; to commune with the general assembly and Church of the Firstborn; and to enjoy the communion and presence of God the Father, and Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant."*** [D&C 104:9a,b]

As Apostles, it is your duty ***"to ordain and set in order all the other officers of the Church"*** [D&C 104:30] in accordance with Church law. You will call and ordain men to compose a Standing High Council. You will consider the obligation of the Church to witness by seeking among the elders for men qualified to become Seventies. Also, you will give attention to the need of the Church for men to be added to the Patriarchal Order. You will safeguard the body of Christ by insisting that the ordinances of the Gospel are performed in the proper manner. You must always remember ***"in the ordinances...the power of godliness is manifest,"*** [D&C 83:3c] and if they are neglected or changed, the Lord cannot add His Spirit to their performance. Then the witness of the Church becomes ineffective. Therefore, you must take steps to see the Church observes the ordinances correctly.

This day the Lord commits to your care His faithful little flock. As good over-shepherds, you will treat this sacred stewardship with the utmost care. Always remember the needs of the saints as they struggle to reach the level of true discipleship. When you move among the people, many will show you much affection. They may be excessive in complimenting you upon your ministry. Beware of praise which can, at times, be flattery. Do not be led to think more highly of yourselves than you ought to think. If you are rebuffed and scorned, reflect upon the treatment given our Lord by those He had come to save. Allow Him to sustain you in all circumstances.

"Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time. Casting all your care on Him; for He careth for you. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist steadfast...knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus...Make you perfect" [1 Peter 5:6-10] while he establishes and strengthens you by His Spirit.

It is the duty of all of us within the Church to support these new apostles with our prayers so they will be able to do all the Lord desires them to do in renewing the Church. We must make it easy for them to direct the affairs of the Church by accepting their guidance and their counsel which will be in harmony with the statutes and doctrine of the Church. A major part of their success or failure as Christ's representatives will depend upon the way we receive their ministry.

I charge you all, both you seven men who are to be Apostles, and all in the sound of my voice, be faithful to the covenant you have made to serve the Lord. Always keep His commandments so the Holy Spirit can abide in the Church.

Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory

with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

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The ordinations were performed in the order of seniority and age, with the exception of the Conference Chairman, as follows:

Ordinations:

- High Priest David W. Bowerman was ordained an Apostle by High Priest V. Lee Killpack - assisted by High Priest James L. Rogers and Seventy Gary L. Argotsinger.
- High Priest V. Lee Killpack was ordained an Apostle by Apostle David W. Bowerman - assisted by High Priest James L. Rogers and Seventy Gary L. Argotsinger.
- High Priest James L. Rogers was ordained an Apostle by Apostle V. Lee Killpack - assisted by Apostle David W. Bowerman and Seventy Gary L. Argotsinger.

Hymn 266 - *"Lord, Speak...That I May Speak"*

- Seventy Gary L. Argotsinger was ordained a High Priest and an Apostle by Apostle James L. Rogers - assisted by Apostle V. Lee Killpack and Apostle David W. Bowerman.
- Elder P. James Buchman was ordained a High Priest and an Apostle by Apostle Gary L. Argotsinger - assisted by Apostle James L. Rogers and Apostle David W. Bowerman.
- Elder Steve R. Church was ordained a High Priest and an Apostle by Apostle P. James Buchman - assisted by Apostle Gary L. Argotsinger and Apostle James L. Rogers.
- Elder Robert E. Ostrander was ordained a High Priest and an Apostle by Apostle Steve R. Church - assisted by Apostle P. James Buchman and Apostle V. Lee Killpack.

Acting in harmony with earlier determination by the designated Apostles, Elder Bowerman was "set apart" as President of the Quorum of Twelve by Apostles James Buchman and James Rogers.

The afternoon business session received the Treasurer's Report as printed, approved the Conference Budget, and approved an adjusted Church Budget. In other action the Conference authorized the Apostolic Quorum to make adjustments to the Church Budget as they deem necessary to meet any unexpected, or unforeseen circumstances that may arise. These changes to be approved by a majority of a Standing High Council, or absent a Standing High Council, they may appoint an ad hoc Council of High Priests consisting of no less than seven members.

David W. Bowerman, president of the Quorum of Twelve, reported to the Conference the following list of items as representative of matters which the Twelve will need to address promptly:

- It will be necessary for the quorum to make some determination relative to field assignments.
- Various aspects of the departmental functions at the General Church level will need attention.
- Consideration, very quickly, will be given to the selection of the Standing High Council.
- Must assume the responsibility very soon to seek out and call men to function as Seventy.
- Begin a prayerful search in preparation for receiving direction to call and ordain additional Patriarch-Evangelists.
- Prepare an Epistle to all the identifiable restoration groups and organizations.
- Develop a missionary strategy for ministry to those groups and our former associates in the Reorganized Church.
- Develop directives for membership status.
- Develop guidelines for branches and districts.
- Complete the handbook on Administrative Policies and Procedures initiated by the Council of High Priests, based on the law.
- Develop procedures for processing calls and ordinations to priesthood. Also, the proper handling of ordinances and statistical reporting.
- Supporting temporalities ministries.
- Execute the law of tithing.
- Recognize the rightful place of the quorums in General Conferences.

A standing vote of appreciation was extended to the Council of High Priests, and to the three Patriarchs for their service over the past months.

The Conference adjourned to convene again April 6-8, 2001 by singing *"Redeemer of Israel"* and closing prayer by Apostle V. Lee Killpack.

As a part of the Conference activities, two preaching services were held. Saturday evening High Priest Carl VunCannon, Jr. spoke on the topic of *"Laying Securely the Foundations of Zion"*. Sunday morning Apostle Gary L. Argotsinger delivered the message on the theme *"The Day of My Power"*.

As the Church moves forward, may we be charged as were the seven Apostles: ***"Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time. Casting all your care on Him; for He careth for you. Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour; whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus...Make you perfect"*** (1 Peter 5:6-10) that ***"...when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."*** (1 Peter 5:4)

V. Lee Killpack

Chairman of the Conference

THE SELECTION OF SEVEN APOSTLES
of the Remnant CHURCH of JESUS CHRIST of Latter Day Saints

The following is a narrative history of the experiences of Elders C. Houston Hobart, E. Daniel Gough and Conrad R. Faulk relating to the selection of seven men in the year 2000 to be ordained as the first apostles in the Remnant Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Also included is the testimony of Elders Gough and Faulk (Elder Hobart died prior to the time this narrative and testimony was put into written form) regarding the direction of the Holy Spirit which was evident in great power and without which the task would have been too great to attempt.

THE EVENTS

In the latter part of March 2000, Elder V. Lee Killpack, then Chairman of the Council of High Priests, asked Elders C. Houston Hobart, E. Daniel Gough and Conrad R. Faulk, members of the Order of Patriarch/Evangelists, to meet with him to discuss a matter of great importance. At that meeting, Brother Killpack related an experience where he had received an Inspired Message that involved these three men. This Message involved the selection of seven men to be ordained as Apostles in the Church. That selection, as directed in the Message, was to be made by the three designated men. Brother Killpack asked each man if he would serve on the "committee of three" specified in the Message, if the General Conference of the Church approved the Message and directed that such a selection be made. Each man indicated his willingness to serve if the Conference so directed, while also indicating his feelings of inadequacy to undertake such an important and significant task.

The Message was presented to the General Conference of the Church held April 8-9, 2000. A Resolution to accept the Message was approved and the Conference directed that the "committee of three" be appointed as specified in the Message and that they be charged with the responsibility of selecting seven men whose names should then be presented to the Church at a General Conference to be held on September 23, 2000 for necessary action to authorize that they be ordained as Apostles in the Church.

After that Conference, the "committee of three" met to discuss how best to undertake the assigned task. Elder Hobart, with more than 41 years experience as a full-time Appointee Minister in the RLDS Church, and over 20 years of additional ministry and work in the Restoration Movement during his "retirement," was eminently qualified as an instrument in God's hands. His long experience as a President of Seventy provided a background of experience for the selection of men who were called to special service in the Missionary field. That experience was especially valuable in the counsel he provided to his two brethren regarding the working of the Holy Spirit in guiding those with such responsibilities toward independent and unanimous selection of a few men, out of a group of many good and dedicated men.

The Committee set July 18, 2000, as the deadline for completion of its task, since some time would be needed prior to the Conference in September 2000 to notify the seven men involved and determine each one's willingness to serve if so approved by the Conference. The members of the Committee knew that they had a responsibility to make themselves available to the direction of the Holy Spirit and, also, to do all that they could do on their own, as directed by the spirit of wisdom. It was agreed that, without such guidance, the task could not be completed in a manner that would be pleasing to God.

The members of the Committee undertook a discipline of prayer and fasting, each on his own, and in corporate prayer and study together. Study was undertaken and documents were prepared that related to the responsibilities of the members of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, the characteristics of such men and the expectations that such men should have about occupying the office. This provided the Committee members with additional insight as to the type of men that the Lord was looking for and some of the special qualities that might be expected. It was also realized that such material would be helpful for the men themselves who were going to be asked to accept such onerous responsibilities. In addition, this material was used in some instances for discussions with the Saints to assist them in better understanding the type of men they should expect the Apostles to be, some of the characteristics these men should have, and, although each man would be an individual with his own strengths and talents, how they might be required to meld together in the interests of Christ's Church and the tasks before it.

In an attempt to do the best that could be done to make themselves available for guidance by the Holy Spirit, the Committee members considered the names of Elders and Aaronic Priests in the Church and in the Restoration Movement to the extent their names were available to them. This undertaking led to the general overview of over 1500 men. After the initial meeting to agree upon the approach to be taken, the Committee met together five additional times for prayer and a general discussion regarding the progress of each. There was no discussion, however, about the names that any Committee member was planning to include on his final list. On occasion, a question would be raised by one of the

Committee members regarding an individual he did not know, but about whom he had some sense that he was being directed to consider.

The Committee was scheduled to meet on June 13, 2000 when each member had agreed to be prepared to present the names of four men whom he believed to be among those who were called. It was initially felt that, subsequent to that meeting and prior to the July 18, 2000 deadline, the other three men would then be selected. Once again, preparations were made for the June meeting through prayer and fasting. It should especially be noted that throughout the general body of the Church, the prayers of the membership and of small children still too young to be members, were being raised for "the Patriarchs" (that is, the Committee) in their assigned task. This prayerful support was felt by the members of the Committee and was a source of great strength and comfort.

When the appointed time arrived, the Committee met at the home of Elder Hobart in Independence, Missouri. After a period of worship, it was agreed that Elders Gough and Faulk would write the names of four men each of them felt were to be included and Elder Hobart would then tell whom his list of four included. When the names of the first four men were presented, with each man's list previously known only to himself, the presence of the *Holy Spirit* filled the room. Then came the validation of the presence of the good *Spirit* as it became evident that the list of the first four names presented by each member of the Committee was the same as that of his brethren. With grateful and joyful hearts, a prayer of praise and thanksgiving was offered.

Although it had initially been planned that the final three names were to be submitted at a subsequent meeting, Brother Gough raised a question as to whether the other two members of the Committee were ready to present their list of the other three names? The other two brethren responded they had, in fact, already felt led to complete their list of seven names and, therefore, were prepared to proceed with submitting them at that time. The same procedure used for presenting the first four names was once again utilized. When the final three names were laid before the Committee, it was a most gratifying and uplifting experience as it was discovered that the second list was also the same for each of the Committee members. There was unanimous agreement on all seven names. The experience of the Committee during this selection process was one that was unusually gratifying and strengthening because of the strong and sure support of the *Holy Spirit* throughout. The first part of the task had been completed well before the original "deadline" of July 18, 2000.

In a later Inspired Message to the people of the Church in attendance at the Reunion in Wilburton, Oklahoma held during the last full week of June 2000, the assurance was given that, because of the prayerful support of the people, the selection of the seven men had been completed much more easily than could have been otherwise expected.

Now that the names of the men had been revealed to them and agreed upon, it was the responsibility of the Committee members to contact the seven men to determine each man's willingness to accept his call and serve as an Especial Witness, if approved by Conference action. It should be noted that the Committee members had petitioned the Lord through prayer asking that, prior to being contacted, each man would have an experience that would prepare him and give him assurance of his call. Each man was then sought out individually and privately told of his call. Members of the Committee shared their testimonies of the divinity of the call, spoke of the responsibilities of the office of Apostle and gave assurance of their support for the man involved. In one way or another, but always with humility and expressions of unworthiness, each of the seven men expressed his willingness to respond to the call and to serve to the best of his ability. It was also notable that each man had had a prior experience that prepared him and even told him that he would be called upon to serve in the office of an Apostle. It was consistent among these men that they first responded to the thoughts they had received by chastising themselves for having such thoughts because of feelings of unworthiness. Once again the Lord was merciful as He responded to the prayers asking for the strengthening assurance of the presence of His Spirit.

Once these discussions had been completed with each of the men, arrangements were made to meet with him and his spouse. As discussed with the seven men, it was the firm opinion of the members of the Committee that a man's companion was an important source of support and strength. It was also noted that the sacrifice of an Apostle's wife is great, as she must bear alone many burdens when her husband is going about the Lord's work in the missionary field. In every instance, as discussions were held with the wives, they were supportive and willing to make those sacrifices that might be required. It is significant that the person who knew each man best, his wife, gave testimony of his goodness and of her confidence that he would serve the Lord and the Church well in the office of Apostle. A copy of the material prepared by the Committee regarding the responsibilities, personal characteristics, etc. of an Apostle was given to each man for his personal study and consideration.

As these meetings were held, and the man and his wife became privy to the calling, they were instructed to tell no one about the call. It was the belief of the members of the Committee that, because they were acting in accordance with instructions of the General Conference, the report of the Committee would be made only to the Conference, and no one else was authorized to receive the full information prior to that time. Therefore, complete privacy was the goal of the

Committee. To the credit of all involved, none of the names was divulged prior to the report being made to the Conference.

The Committee Report was read to the General Conference on September 23, 2000. Each of the seven men named in the Report was given an opportunity to speak to the Conference. The Report was received and approved by action of the Conference. When the Report was read to the Conference, the men involved found out for the first time the names of those with whom they would be serving in the Quorum of Twelve. By Conference action, authorization was given and arrangements were made for the ordinations of the first seven Apostles of the Remnant Church.

THE TESTIMONY

When the Inspired Message was read for the first time in our presence by Brother Killpack, each of us noted privately, and subsequently confirmed to each other, that the impress of the *Holy Spirit* was great. Further, even prior to the reading of the Message, as we entered the room where the meeting was to take place, each one felt the presence of the Holy Spirit.

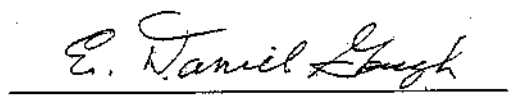
We are fully assured, and have no doubt that we were directed by the Holy Spirit throughout this experience and the fulfillment of our assigned task. None of us felt that coincidence, or any law of numbers, or any circumstance other than the influence of the *Holy Spirit* was being evidenced in this experience. When the probability was considered that, by any reasonable law of chance, the Committee, each member on his own, would select the same seven names out of all those that had been considered, it was recognized that it was a strong testimony of the presence of the *Holy Spirit*. Further, the fact that each presentation of names, first four, then three, was exactly the same, gave additional assurance that what had taken place was not simply according to the mind of any man or men.

At the time the names of the seven men were first presented in the meeting of the Committee, each man testified individually of his conviction that David W. Bowerman was one of those to be selected. However, each one also had a testimony that Brother Bowerman would at some future time be called to serve as a Counselor in the First Presidency. That testimony was not shared outside the Committee. There was no President of the High Priesthood in office at that time; however, those testimonies regarding Brother Bowerman have now been confirmed with his ordination as a Counselor to President Frederick N. Larsen.

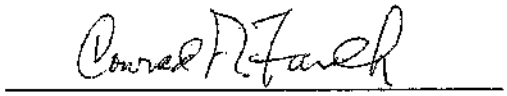
As an additional testimony, it should also be noted that although some of the seven men were known by members of the Committee, that was not true of all the men. For example, one of the seven was known by only one of the Committee, with the other two having each met that man briefly one time some years before. The entire experience, from the presentation of the Inspired Message, through the meetings with the seven men and their wives, to the Conference action and ordination of the Apostles, was one of spiritual direction and fulfillment for which we praise and thank our Heavenly Father.

It is the testimony of the undersigned, E. Daniel Gough and Conrad R. Faulk, that the events related above are true and accurate and that the selection of seven men to be ordained as Apostles in the Remnant Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints was under the direction of the *Holy Spirit*. The experiences related were shared with our brother, Elder C. Houston Hobart, and, although he is now deceased, his presence was with us in many ways as we put into writing these events and our testimony.

Attested by our signatures on November 1, 2002.



E. Daniel Gough



Conrad R. Faulk

Remnant *CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST* of Latter Day Saints
FIRST GENERAL EPISTLE OF THE QUORUM OF TWELVE
January, 2001

To all Restoration Saints **GREETINGS:**

In the words of the hymn, which speak so beautifully of the great hope and longing for Zion held by all Saints and faithful brethren, we greet you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Read again these words, modified in the last line to reflect present conditions (DC 137:6), and sense anew the hope of Zion which beckons us on.

"Hail to the brightness of Zion's glad morning
Joy to the lands that in darkness have lain;
Hushed be the accents of sorrow and mourning,
Zion in bondage awaits her mild reign."

Our hearts have rejoiced anew with the promise of the Kingdom and we declare as did the Apostle Paul:

> ***"For this cause we...do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long suffering with joyfulness; giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son..."*** (I Col. 1: 9-13).

By the same spirit under which the Apostle wrote these words to former day saints, we address you in peace, with the sincere desire that we may all be fruitful in every good work. We wish to make it known to all men that God has moved to bring His Church again from the darkness of mistaken notions and departures from the law into the dawning light of a new day.

With deep feelings of yearning for the welfare of the Saints, and renewal of the Church our Lord and Savior restored to the earth in April, 1830, and regretting past failures, we join our sentiments as one to send forth this call to all who are willing to hear. As those called to bear special witness of Jesus Christ, and proclaim His gospel of the Kingdom, we solemnly declare that the work of restoring and renewing that which has been lost or abandoned is once again called forth and commissioned by the power and purpose of a never-changing God.

We rejoice in the privilege of laboring for the Master under the mantle of His Holy Spirit. We bear witness of the call that has come to revive and set in order His Church by small but certain steps. We testify anew of the grace of our Lord, by the confirmation of the Spirit, and the Word, that His righteous and eternal purposes will be carried forward. Indeed with new hope under-girded by Divine command, we joyfully proclaim to every one in any group or movement of the Restoration faith, whether currently or in a former time, to heed the summons to "come home." The day of freeing Zion from her bondage is at hand!

Having heard that summons and acting by the authority of the God of Heaven, we solemnly proclaim a time of renewal, a coming together, a gathering in of the faithful, for thus saith the Spirit to the churches scattered abroad, "There have been days of calling but this is a day of choosing." There appears to be a tendency among some of the Saints that we are to wait on the Lord. The saints must hear and know that ***"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise and coming, as some men count slackness; but long-suffering toward us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance"*** (II Peter 3:9). God is never the problem, nor is He ever responsible for our dilemma. Contrary to taking the position we can do nothing, our Lord has said:

> ***"...Behold, it is not meet that I should command in all things, for he that is compelled in all things, the same is a slothful and not a wise servant; wherefore he receiveth no reward. Verily I say, men should be anxiously engaged in a good cause, and do many things of their own free will, and bring to pass much righteousness; for the power is in them, wherein they are agents unto themselves. And inasmuch as men do good, they shall in nowise lose their reward. But he that doeth not anything until he is commanded, and receiveth a commandment with doubtful heart, and keepeth it with slothfulness, the same is damned"*** (DC 58: 6c-f)

"There is even now already in store a sufficient, yea, even abundance to redeem Zion, and establish her waste places, no more to be thrown down, were the churches, who call themselves after my name, willing to hearken to my voice" (DC 98: 10c).

Let us realize the problem lies in us and not with our Lord. Our only faithful choice is heeding His admonition. We plead with those who are scattered and estranged, heed the counsel of our God whose eye is upon all men everywhere and whose word has been spoken by His servants, the Prophets of the ages, and to all dispensations. The time of our waiting in uncertainty and independent groups must come to an end if His purposes, so clearly and unmistakably set forth in the Holy Scriptures, are to find fulfillment among us.

In harmony with the pattern for reorganization followed in an earlier day, and moved by that same Spirit which guided and molded a new beginning then, we come in this day of confusion and moral rebellion to proclaim the good news of Divine intervention once more. Though we willingly acknowledge our own weakness and limited vision, we bear witness of the call to unite anew, by covenant and faith, in the great work of bringing forth and establishing the cause of Zion. We firmly declare that the way of discipleship is straight and narrow and for that reason we proclaim the doctrines and teachings of the most Holy Faith as taught and lived out by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and recorded in the New Testament, as also we pledge ourselves and urge others to hold to His laws and commandments made available by the power of God and revealed in the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants.

In order to act acceptably in the ordinances, the ministers whom God has appointed must be men of unusual moral integrity and spiritual discipline. Having accepted the call to be "spiritual authorities," we have pledged ourselves to that discipline and now call on every authoritatively ordained brother to cast his lot with us in moving forward the great work of redemption for all people. Let every man of good will and faith in the eternal plan of Almighty God, come now in humility of purpose and with righteous intent, and join his strength to this work of proclaiming restoration and renewal.

To the separated and independent branches of various "restoration" persuasions, we here and now reaffirm and extend the hand of fellowship. Let us all unite knowing that each must forsake all for Christ and His Gospel. We hold that the Articles and Covenants of the faith must be the basis for our union and fellowship. None can be a law unto himself in Christ's Church, neither the apostle nor the priest, the elder nor the member. All must be subject to Christ, who is the head of the Church, for it is in Him we live and move and have our being.

It is the committed purpose of the Quorum of Twelve to act in our office in all faithfulness, seeking nothing but the good of all. Moreover, we pledge to defend and uphold the faith once delivered in purity and power by the will of God. We further pledge ourselves to teach no doctrine, promote no teaching, and to neither conduct nor support any practice or action not in accord with the true faith as ***"once delivered to the Saints"*** (Jude 1:3), and as defined by the Scriptures and the Rules and Resolutions that govern the Church.

We again extend the invitation, to all individuals and groups with a Restoration background to join with the Remnant Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, which we firmly declare is neither a new nor a different church organization, but rather a true and lawful succession of the Church restored April 6, 1830, and the Reorganization of 1853-1860. Membership is authorized and conditioned by a consistent practice of holding to the faith, as much as possible during the years of separation and searching, since 1984. All authoritative ordinances (that which was performed in good faith, in harmony with long held procedure, free from divergent or impulsive action) will in general be received and welcomed in accordance with the principles outlined in Doctrine and Covenants 119:4, where Melchisedec priesthood authority has continued unbroken, and currently remains intact. In all other instances entry shall be "by the door," as clearly taught by the Master, that is, baptism and confirmation by those having authority.

It is the duty of the Quorum of Twelve, in complete harmony with the pattern given by the Revelation of 1853 (C.H. Vol. 3, p. 217) setting forth the procedure for reorganization, to call and set in their places other offices in the Church, namely: High Priests, High Council members, Patriarch/Evangelists, Seventy, and Quorum Presidencies for the High Priests, Elders, Priests, Teachers, and Deacons. With the office of President of the High Priesthood we have nothing to do (C.H. Vol. 3, p. 244). That office, being beyond our authority, must await the call and command of God in the manner of His choosing. Since the office, calling and ordination of a Presiding Bishop, being made by law a specific duty of the First Presidency, the Church must also await the filling of that

office (DC 68: 2). We will however, to the best of our ability and in faithful commitment to our calling as a traveling, presiding, and regulating High Council (DC 104: 12), fulfill the duties of our office as God gives us strength and spiritual guidance. The performance of our labors will be to administer the affairs of that office as outlined by the Apostle Peter, not as overseers but as faithful servants in harmony with the commandments of God, with all diligence and in all long suffering, having no desire for financial gain nor personal glory. In so doing we will call on both priesthood and membership to do likewise, esteeming the approbation of our Heavenly Father a greater blessing than all the gold or silver, fame or fortune this world can offer (I Peter 5).

In order for the Church to move forward in its work, we will call upon the Elders (all Melchisedec offices) whose age, condition of health, and circumstance will allow, to make themselves available for ministerial assignments. The call is likewise extended to every member to accept the challenge of devoted stewardship. The blessings of heaven await the willing and dedicated response of the Saints in laboring for Zion by producing all we are able in righteousness, and in being willing and faithful stewards over our increase (Jacob 2: 23-24).

The call is to ***"...Prepare ye the way of the Lord, prepare ye the supper of the Lamb, make ready for the Bridegroom..."*** (DC 65: 1c). It is now time to settle in our hearts whether we will do that which our Lord has taught and commanded. It is time to build, and none can build upon the sure foundation without first yielding his heart to God. The Saints must by fervent prayer and fasting grow stronger in humility, and more resolute in their faith (Hel. 2: 31). May the fiery trials that refine us hasten the day when the heavens and earth should come together (Gen. 14: 35). We call upon the Saints, ***"As a father doth his children, that ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you into His kingdom and glory"*** (I Thes. 2: 11-12). The warning voice is, ***"See that ye refuse not him that speaketh...for our God is a consuming fire"*** (Heb. 12: 25,29). ***"Wherefore we, receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, should have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and Godly fear"*** (Heb. 12: 28). We remind the Saints of God's promise and command to the faithful, ***"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that reviles against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn..."*** (III Ne. 10: 25).

By this communication we now leave with you our fervent testimony of the work to which all are called. It is of God. His Spirit has directed and is guiding this movement of gathering the Saints into one body, one Lord, one faith, and one baptism. Come home to the faith of our fathers! The work of Restoration presses heavily upon us. The keeper of the gate is the Holy One of Israel, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He has never relinquished leadership of His Church, and now again in these last of the Latter Days bids all to come and partake of the waters of life freely. He is indeed, Lord of Lords, our strength and our refuge.

We close with words used by a former Quorum of Twelve in their first epistle to the fledgling Reorganization after young Joseph came to Amboy. It was dated October 25, 1861, and expresses graphically and movingly our prayer for each one of you.

> "Finally, brethren, be of good cheer, for the light of truth shines with renewed brilliancy upon the pathway that saints are called to walk. Zion, the pure in heart, must be redeemed by righteousness, but the land of Zion by power. The first we may, by the grace of God, work out; the second, we leave in the hands of Him that hath power and that doeth all things well. Commending all saints to the mercy of God, and fellowship of His Spirit, through our Lord Jesus Christ" (C.H. Vol.3, pg. 300)

In full and complete harmony with these sentiments we, as present day Apostles of the same Lord, do solemnly send this epistle abroad by way of invitation and warning. The day of opportunity is far spent and the hour of our privilege for choosing is closing around us. In the spirit of all that we jointly hold true and sacred, we reaffirm the call to come and find fellowship and unity among His covenant people.

Yours in Christ Jesus our Lord,

THE QUORUM OF TWELVE

Gary L. Argotsinger	V. Lee Killpack	Steve R. Church
David W. Bowerman	Robert E. Ostrander	
P. James Buchman	James L. Rogers	

A PATTERN FROM HISTORY

By Marjorie F. Spease

History has valuable lessons for those willing to learn. When the lessons of history are not studied, or are disregarded, mistakes are repeated and little progress is made. When lessons are learned from the past, foundations already laid can be built upon, and progress and growth are soon evident.

In the present confusion of the Restoration Branches, with all the rumors and misinformation, it would be well to look to history to learn just how the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints came into being. It was not a "reorganizing." It was simply a setting in order of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints—the original church exactly as it had been restored in 1830. It was the church in succession to which faithful members could be called back to participation and unity. "There was no intention at this time of organizing a new church, but these men were acting as members and officers of the original church, regulating and setting in order the church, according to the law, as they understood it, and in harmony with the instruction given to them."[1]

This previous setting in order was not done by a council of twenty-three High Priests acting under the impulsion and guidance of the Holy Spirit. It was accomplished by two High Priests and seventeen Elders, one of whom was a Senior President of Seventy, acting under the urging and instruction of the Holy Spirit.

In the Fall of 1851, Zenos Gurley recorded that he was told by the Spirit to "Rise up, cast off all that claim to be prophets, and go forth and preach the gospel and say that God will raise up a prophet to complete his work. I answered 'I will do it, God being my helper.'"[2]

In November, 1851, through the Spirit Jason Briggs was told to withdraw from these who claimed to be prophets, and "in mine own due time, I will call upon the seed of Joseph Smith."[3]This message was taken to the June, 1852 conference at Beloit, Wisconsin, at which it was accepted as the word of God. This was the beginning of the reorganization.

At this conference, all connection and fellowship was disclaimed with Brigham Young, James J. Strang, James Colin Brewster, William Smith (brother of Joseph Smith, Jr.) and Joseph Wood, all of whom had tried to assume leadership of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. No action was taken toward reorganization. They waited in expectation that one of the sons of Joseph Smith, Jr., would sometime accept the leadership of the church.[4]

A conference was held at Yellowstone, Wisconsin in October, 1852, at which time "a resolution was adopted to provide for a temporary presiding officer, while awaiting the coming of the promised President of the High Priesthood: Resolved, that the highest authority among the priesthood represents the legitimate President as a presiding authority."[5]

Brother Gurley stated that in early January, 1853, the Good Spirit had "given them some intimation of organizing." In March, 1853, he recorded that as the Spirit intimated "that we must organize, this was strange teaching to me. I replied 'It is impossible for us to organize further than we have.' I knew that we could not create a priesthood. I conversed with several of the brethren on the subject and we set it down as a mistake."[6] About two months later when they were told to organize, they did not know how. The instructions found in Doctrine and Covenants, Section 122, were not available to them. These were given forty-one years later, because the Lord knew that at a future time, such instruction would be needed. After seeking wisdom from above, these men "were told to appoint a day to come together fasting and praying, and the Lord would show us how to organize."[7]

March 20, 1853 was the appointed day. The men met in fasting and prayer. Brother Gurley stated that "at this meeting, there was not so much of the Spirit as at former times, but a good feeling and influence prevailed."[8] God did not speak to them in thundering tones or even immediately in the gentle "Thus Saith the Spirit." Rather, as they continued in prayer, no light had come to the group as a whole. After about an hour, Brother Henry Deam approached Brother Gurley and asked if he had received a message from the Lord. Upon being told that Brother Gurley had not, Brother Deam said "I have." He was asked to write the message.[9] *"Verily, thus saith the Lord, as I said unto my servant, Moses, 'See thou do all things according to the pattern,' so say I unto you. Behold the pattern is before you. It is my will that you respect authority in my church; therefore let the greatest among you preside at your conference. Let three men be appointed by the conference to select seven men from among you, who shall compose a majority of the Twelve Apostles; for it is my will that that quorum should not be filled up at present. Let the president of the Conference, assisted by two others, ordain them. (The Senior of them shall preside.) Let them select twelve men from among you, and ordain them to compose my High Council. Behold, you understand the order of the Bishopric, the Seventy, the Elders, the Priests, Teachers, and Deacons. These organize according to the pattern. Behold, I will be with you unto the end; Amen."*[10]

In April, 1853, nearly all the church gathered for a conference at Zarahemla, Wisconsin. There was contention and bickering over who should rightly preside over the conference. Much disagreement was evidenced over whose priesthood was the highest -- the two High Priests or the one Senior President of Seventy.

At the evening prayer service on April 6, Brother Deam read the message which had been received on March 20, and asked the people to pray for light as to whether it was from God. Through a number of people, the Spirit affirmed the message. They were then told that the

[1] RLDS Church History, Vol. 3, p. 211
[2] Ibid p. 208
[3] Ibid p. 201
[4] Ibid p. 211
[5] Church Record, p. 7 (Quoted C.H. 213)
[6] C.H., Vol. 3, p. 215
[7] Ibid p. 217
[8] Ibid p. 217
[9] Ibid p. 217 & 218
[10] True L.D.S. Herald, Vol. 1, p. 53-55

Lord had withheld his Spirit from his Elders to show them that they did not have sufficient wisdom to organize. God said "If I had shown you at first, all would apostatize; as it is many of you will apostatize, but some will remain, and they shall be a means in my hands of bringing back others."[11] Eventually, a vote was called from the Melchisedec priesthood who were present: two High Priests, and seventeen Elders, one of whom was a Senior President of Seventy. J. W. Briggs was finally chosen president of the conference, after which there was such "an exhibition of power, light, and unity of spirit ... and the evident proofs of divine direction so strong, that doubt disappeared ... diversity of opinion ceased, and the whole people were truly of one heart and one soul."[12]

The next morning, the March 20 revelation on organizing was presented to the conference for action. It was accepted by unanimous vote, after which the instructions given were followed. Men were appointed to the various offices and duties as God had outlined for them. Later in the conference, the Apostles met to elect their president. J. W. Briggs suggested that the oldest man be chosen. Zenos H. Gurley refused the honor. The next oldest, Henry Deam, also refused. They both then moved that J. W. Briggs be elected president. The motion carried.

Later, Brother Gurley wrote "When the command to organize came, we thought it impossible for us to obey, not having authority to ordain apostles, etc; but we learned what every Latter Day Saint must learn, that a command from God is authority to do all that he requires, be it more or less."[13]

That group of dedicated men knew that Joseph Smith III had been designated by his father, Joseph Smith, Jr., to be the future Prophet-President of the church. But other than their own strong faith, they had no knowledge that he would accept that responsibility. He was being courted by the various factions which had come into existence after the 1844 martyrdom of Joseph Smith, Jr., and his brother, Hyrum Smith, the Presiding Patriarch of the Church. Young Joseph had made visits of observation and learning to some of these factions. At the time of the beginning of the setting in order, young Joseph was not quite twenty years of age, but the brethren knew that an organization needed to be ready if and when he did come.

Just previous to the conference of April, 1860, a "call" was sent to the Elders to attend. The "call" included these words: "We are aware that our position and declarations to the church have caused many of the wise ones of the church to smile at our (supposed) folly; brethren, heed them not... Their laughter will soon be turned to mourning. While they mourn, you will rejoice, not in their calamity, but in the fulfillment of all the promises of God to us."[14]

When Joseph III did come to the 1860 conference in Amboy, Illinois, his now familiar words "I come in obedience to a power not my own" were an affirmation of the rightness of the action taken in 1852 and 1853.

Joseph asked the people "to judge fairly and impartially, laying their prejudices aside, relying not upon rumor for their knowledge, but investigating for themselves."[15]

In addition to the setting in order, there had of necessity to be a calling together of the scattered saints, and some organizing had to take place. It was spoken of as "reorganization," but the word "Reorganized" was not added to the name of the church until 1866, and then it was because of the confusion resulting from the Utah faction using the same name. Because of that faction having espoused polygamy and some other doctrines not in the original church, some differentiation had to be made between the Utah faction and the legal church in succession. Similarly, to show a distinction from the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and other factions, the scriptural name "Remnant" has been chosen for when the church in succession today shall be set in order – the "Remnant Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints." It will be a continuing, not a beginning of a new church. Many people seem not to know, or are choosing to ignore, the pattern the Lord gave in 1853 to a faithful and inquiring few. God gave His instructions in 1852 and 1853. Why should He need to repeat them in 1999 and 2000? If He is unchangeable, His instructions and His law are also unchangeable.

Those who speak personally with any of the twelve men who were the developers and original signers of the "Proclamation and Invitation to the Faithful" will hear unshakable testimony that God did prompt their actions, that the Holy Spirit was present in their midst, did speak to their souls, and did guide them even in the content and wording of the "Proclamation." Those who speak to the many members of the Melchisedec priesthood who signed and support the "Proclamation" or to any of the twenty-three High Priests who voted to affirm and implement – according to the pattern in the law – the requests of the Prayer and Study Group as set forth in the "Proclamation," will also hear powerful personal and group testimonies. And to those Melchisedec priesthood who gathered in fasting and prayer at Blue Springs, Missouri, on October 30, 1999, and there voted unanimous approval and support to the temporary Council of High Priests, just as occurred on April 6, 1853, diversity of opinion ceased, and the men testify that they were truly unified as one heart and soul.

Today no one knows who will be the future Prophet-President of the church. But God knows, and when in his infinite wisdom and love, he chooses to make that man known to his people, just as in 1852 to 1860, an organization needs to be ready and prayerfully waiting for that humble servant to also come in obedience to a power not his own. ■

[11] C.H. Vol. 3, p. 220-221
[12] Ibid p. 222
[13] Ibid p. 221
[14] Ibid p. 245
[15] Ibid p. 275

THE NAME OF THE CHURCH

By High Priest James Rogers

During our Lord's third visit among the Nephites, the disciples asked him what they should call his church: "*And Jesus said unto them... What will ye that I shall give unto you? And they said unto him, Lord, we will that thou wouldst tell us the name whereby we shall call this church; for there are disputations among the people concerning this matter. And the Lord said unto them, Verily, verily I say unto you, Why is it that the people should murmur and dispute because of this thing.... For if a church be called in Moses' name, then it be Moses' church; or if it be called in the name of a man, then it be the church of a man; but if it be called in my name, then it is my church, if it so be that they are built upon my gospel.*" [16]

We must conclude, therefore, that the true church of Jesus Christ will bear his name, teach his gospel, and show forth his works. All three characteristics must be evident before the church can be accepted of him.

In the Book of Mormon, the church is referred to in several ways, such as the "Church of Christ" and the "Church of God," etc. In the early Restoration (1830-1835), the church was referred to by various names: "Church of Christ," "Church of God," "Church of Jesus Christ," and the "Church of the Latter Day Saints." It was not until 1838 that the Lord gave direction that the church should be called "Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints."

[16] 3 Nephi 12:15-17, 20

After the death of Joseph Smith, Jr. in 1844, some of the factions transgressed the laws, changed the ordinances, and having slipped into apostasy, were rejected by God. An apostate church by any name is still an apostate church, for in such a church the pure gospel of Jesus Christ is not preached by an authorized priesthood, and in such a church the Father will not show forth His works.

In Amboy, Illinois, on April 6, 1860, Joseph Smith III came to a church which had been in disarray and struggling for sixteen years. In 1861, when young Joseph wrote his first epistle calling for the scattered saints to come in, he wrote of himself as, "...a true son of a true father," and as "President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints."[17] Obviously, Joseph was not stating that he was President of the Mormon Church in Utah, with which he vowed to have nothing to do. Since the Mormon church had taken the name, "Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints," and had gone into apostasy, the remaining saints no longer wanted to be identified with that church.

Then to what church did the saints belong if they did not affiliate with the Mormon church? They belonged to the church of Jesus Christ eternal—the same church as Adam, Enoch, Abraham, Moses and Joseph. It was the same church to which Lehi, Nephi, Mosiah, Alma and Moroni belonged. When Alma heard and believed the words of Abinadi, he began to preach, and he baptized in the waters of Mormon. Into what church was he baptizing? None other than the Church of Jesus Christ eternal in heaven. The same church in different dispensations of time, even though not fully organized and at times called by different names, is still the Church of Jesus Christ, "... if it so be that they are built upon [his] gospel."

[17] Church History, Vol. 3, p. 291

In order to differentiate themselves, the Restoration saints began to be known as the "Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints." However, the formal recognition, and official adoption, of this name was not effected until October 21, 1872, at Plano, Illinois. Were they starting a new church? No, the prefix and suffix simply distinguishes this church from others. Therefore, only as it is built upon his doctrine and shows forth his works, can it truly be called the Church of Jesus Christ (of Latter Day Saints).

There is a sense of hurt and frustration in the struggling Restoration Branches today. Some are hoping that the Lord will turn the institutional hierarchy around and correct the violations. To this we must ask, Did God turn Brigham Young around, and those who followed him? Of course not. He did not violate their agency, nor will He ours. Why? Because He has guaranteed every man the right of choice. It is a sacred right given everyone. After the apostasy of certain factions in the Restoration, Joseph Smith III came to the saints to follow their initial

effort to bring order out of disorder. We have confidence that God is similarly moving among the faithful saints to restore the scattered flock today.

When this happens, what will the name be? It will be the "... Church of Jesus Christ." The prefix and the suffix will only be added to denote the dispensation of time, in other words, to distinguish it historically and legally from other existing organizations. Many are saying that those who are interested in the "Remnant Church of Jesus Christ..." are starting a new church. Did Joseph Smith III and his followers start a new church when they changed the name? Not at all, for they recognized that they were the successors of the original church brought back into order so that it could continue its mission.

Those involved in the Restoration Branches and groups should not be concerned about a name. Hundreds of Restoration Branches have chosen many different names for legal reasons. What we should be concerned about is that we call ourselves after his name, the "Church of Jesus Christ," and that we become one, holding fast to his doctrine.

Is there anyone who does not want to see the church restored, renewed, refreshed, reordered, and set back on track so that it can fulfill its glorious mission of building Zion?

Dear saints, something has to happen. There must be a coming together of those who love one another and who will work together. Is additional revelation needed to set the church back in order? Certainly! The church will not be back on track until a prophet is divinely designated and all the quorums are set in order. God will not do that until we become of one heart and one mind. Jesus said, "*...if ye are not one, ye are not mine,*"[18] and we certainly are not one. Jesus also said, "*Where two or three are gathered together in my name, as touching one thing, behold, there will I be....*"[19] He will not be with us just because two or three are gathered together. The further condition is that we are "touching" or agreeing on one thing, or in other words, being of one heart and one mind. Then he promises to be with us. No matter how small the group is, the endowment will come to those who love one another, who are of one heart and mind, and who keep the commandments.

At the Conference of 1853, when the church began to be set in order, there were only nineteen priesthood members; one high priest, one seventy, and seventeen elders, most of whom came out of four branches – Amboy, Beloit, Zarahemla, and Yellowstone. In 1860, when Joseph Smith III finally came to join them he said, "I wish to say that I have come here not to be dictated by any men or set of men. I have come in obedience to a power not my own, and shall be dictated by the power that sent me." (C.H., Vol 3, p. 247)

They had been meeting and planning for that moment for eight years. A revelation was given in 1853 through High Priest Henry Deam, that seven Apostles and a High Council of twelve High Priests should be called and ordained.

The "Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints" remains because it calls itself after his name, and diligently keeps his laws and ordinances.

Let there now be a coming together of a people who will keep the commandments and sanctify their lives. Let us be of one heart and one mind, and make preparation for the coming forth of a Prophet. Then the "Church" and all the quorums will be in order. My heart rejoices, because I believe that day will soon come.

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[18] D & C 38:6a
[19] D & C 6:15b

SCRIPTURAL AND HISTORICAL EVIDENCES OF CHURCH REORGANIZATION

By Roger C. Gault

Knowing that God is culminating His "great and marvelous work" in this day and age, how do we sift through the many voices clamoring for our attention and support? How do we understand what God's will is for us? There are absolutes we know to be true; while God makes no mistakes, men frequently do. Our commission is still to build the kingdom. Since no other religious group today has such a unique task, should we not expect that our history will have something to say about this?

Taking our primary guidance from *Church History*, we read, "We are striving to secure a unity of belief among the one-time Latter Day Saints, our only intention towards them being for their good. To make this intention apparent to them is our duty; and to present the good in such form that they are attracted to it rather than repulsed from it, is also our duty. Our relation to them then is one of friendship to the men composing them; though there may and ought to be no compromise upon our part with those measures of either or all of them that we believe to be erroneous or wicked."[20]; "...our duty is very plain. It is not to sit idly down in the hope that righteousness will spring from the soil to our salvation, nor to the encouragement of a morbid sentimentality under the guise of ascetic religion; nor to a wild and careless enthusiasm that will continue to overlook the practical parts of our faith.... We must look all the difficulties surrounding us, and the conditions of our lives, directly in the face, take them all into account, and with a steadfast purpose, fixed upon the object or objects to be obtained, pursue individually and collectively that line of conduct which will best secure those objects."[21]

Isn't it interesting how some very similar concepts were being contended with in 1852, even as we are struggling today? As priesthood, it is our duty to make our intentions apparent to the body. What is it we are trying to accomplish, and in what manner and for what purpose? It doesn't do any good to present something that turns people away, and so we feel that same urgency that those brethren felt. They just simply said that our approach should not be so rigid, or so loose, that it doesn't bring ministry. Asceticism implies rigidity, while careless enthusiasm implies the opposite. Those brethren were struggling with presenting a body of knowledge in such a manner that it seemed neither so rigid nor careless as to be ridiculous. They were determined to have no compromise with that which was not correct. What those men are saying to us today is that there are some things that must be accomplished. There are goals and objectives that are appropriate and necessary for the functioning of Christ's church, and we have to pursue those goals objectively, and to take whatever line of conduct or action is necessary to keep the church in its restored form.

In a conference address in 1952, Israel A. Smith said, "The testimony of all concerned was that it was not a new organization; that was not necessary. For the original body has perpetual existence in and through its faithful adherence... for the name of the church had no legal significance whatsoever – the whole controversy was in the domain of doctrine and tenets."

That is fundamentally where we stand today. That which is in the process of being brought forth is the understanding, structure, gospel and theology of the original body. We feel we are a part of that body, as it has perpetual existence. The church body doesn't cease to exist just because something wrong has taken place within it. The body has perpetual existence in and through those people who still adhere faithfully to the original tenets and doctrines.

The counsel of D&C 104;9a needs to be part of our foundation again today: ***"The power and authority of the higher, or Melchisedec priesthood is to hold the keys of all the spiritual blessings of the church; to have the privilege of receiving the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven; to have the heavens opened unto them; to commune with the general assembly and church of the Firstborn; and to enjoy the communion and presence of God the Father, and Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant."*** In light of that revelation, we read from C.H., Vol. 5, p. 348, "If the Melchisedec priesthood is present in any of its offices, the right to organize or to reorganize, the power to establish, to build up and to confirm the church is there; and if directed by command of God, to perform all the work necessary."

There are conflicting opinions among us as to what language constitutes a command of God. In receiving direction from the Lord, either we believe in the work of the Holy Spirit or we don't – there is no grey area. In several of his revelations to the church, Israel A.

[20] C.H., Vol. 3, p. 678

[21] C.H., Vol. 3, p. 685

Smith introduces them with these words:

"I was given the assurance..."

"The voice of inspiration to me..."

"I am directed to present the following..."

"The mind of the Lord was manifested to me..."

F. M. Smith, in presenting revelation to the church, introduces them with these words:

"Acting under the impulsion..."

"I am permitted to present..."

"Wisdom and inspiration have been given me..."

"Through the voice of inspiration..."

"Through inspiration received..."

Joseph III introduces some of his revelations to the church with these words:

"Blessed by the presence of the Holy Spirit..."

"In obedience to the Spirit..."

In C.H. Vol. 3, p. 215, Zenos Gurley comments: "It was intimated by the Spirit that we must organize... not a doubt was left on our minds, concerning the source from which the commandment came. We knew it was from God." And so the testimony [the Proclamation] has gone forth to the restoration saints, over the signatures of twelve men: "By the movement of the Spirit of God, these things are presented to you." And our testimony is as firm as Zenos Gurley's was. We knew it was from God. There was no doubt in our mind. It was intimated by the Spirit.

It is recorded in C.H., Vol 3, p. 211, from a conference held June 12-13, 1852: "There was no intention at this time of organizing a new church, but these men were acting as members and officers of the original church, regulating and setting in order the church, according to the law, as they understood it, and in harmony with instruction given to them." Follow the pattern and see the parallels between these two periods of history; that is exactly where we stand today.

These thoughts come from C.H., Vol. 3, p. 295: "Of those who heard that rallying cry... some recognized in it an element of danger to their own ambitions... and set about at once to impede its progress, by slandering its adherents... others treated it with indifference and scorn... others, honest and humble but who had been deceived often, received it with hesitancy and suspicion, and hence were not hearty in its support. And... this movement gathered an element of malcontents, whose normal condition was that of discontent..." History repeats itself, and we find that same thing occurring today. To place the emphasis on what follows in that same writing, "But there was a brighter side; men of unswerving honesty, intrepid courage, and sincere devotion rallied around the banner... it required wisdom, discretion, and valor to meet the situation." This is the challenge that each and every man of the priesthood faces: that in honesty, devotion, wisdom and valor, we meet the situation in which we find ourselves today.

In C. H., Vol. 5, p. 346, we read: "The Melchisedec [priesthood] in which is comprised all grades of authority, and any one of which is competent to the regulating and setting in order all the rest." Simply, we find there the right, the obligation and responsibility of the Melchisedec priesthood to keep order in the church; always keeping it structured in the appropriate way, according to the laws and covenants that have been set forth by God.

In *The Messenger*, Vol. 1, #1, pg. 2, we find these words: "Whether it, [the Church] shall exist in a justified condition, or fully organized condition, from its establishment to its final endowment by the personal coming of its great Head or King, depends not upon the decree of God...." Now if we left it there that would sound very shaky, wouldn't it? The writer goes on to say, "...but the faithfulness of the Church; for it is expressly declared that if not obedient it should be rejected as a Church." Whether the church continues from April 6, 1830 until the coming of our Lord in His Glory and in His endowment, unscathed and unchanged through that entire period of time, does not rest solely on those members of that 1830 church. It now rests on our continuing this correct use of agency, and not just on the actions of those earlier Saints: "For it is expressly declared that if not obedient, it should be rejected as a church."

In a writing of Joseph Smith III entitled, *The Foundations of Reorganization*,[22] Joseph says: "It is not a new dispensation, as contradistinguished from the church established in 1830... other than a commandment to those already empowered to move in given directions to the magnifying of that already given.... If it is not a new dispensation.. what is it? ...it is what its name implies, a reorganization of elements that remained after a disorganization of an organized body had taken place. ...To whom belonged the duty of reorganizing these elements? Clearly to that portion of them that remained within the rule of faith and practice, given of God.... Where was the Church during the lapse of time between the disorganization and the reorganization? It was with the remnant scattered abroad, who remained true to the principles first given as the gospel of Christ; and with any body of such remnant." The "Church" stays with those who are true to that which was brought to earth in 1830.

History is repeating itself, for Joseph goes on to say, "The people that were left thus scattered began to gather themselves, and in conferring began to consider the law by which the Church is to be governed... there was a remnant

[22] C.H., Vol. 5, p. 345-355

remaining, with whom was left a sufficient degree of authority to do what was commanded." This is what has happened in these times; a few began to gather themselves together to confer about what can be done under these conditions.

Joseph Smith III gives us a definition of "the Church": "The Church is the faithful remnant, the body remaining true to the doctrines of the Church." Again he states; "So far as delegated authority from God makes priesthood, the priesthood right to act in the name of the Church as ministers for Christ, remained with the faithful elder, priest, teacher and deacon."

In 1997, the Pattern Committee appointed by the Conference of Restoration Elders put forth an excellent report. On page 4, it says: "Joseph Smith III clearly states the authority to reorganize rests with the Melchisedec priesthood. It does not rest with the Aaronic priesthood, the membership, or the branches until the next step of seeking common consent is needed." That was the purpose of the April General Conference – that was the next step in common consent. To quote again from the Pattern Committee Report, "The law, and He who gave it, are the first authorities in the Church." Some are saying the members have the authority; some are saying the branches; neither is correct. The prophet said the Melchisedec priesthood holds that authority, and we need to adhere to what the prophet says. That is where the responsibility lies.

"The Melchisedec priesthood holds the right of presidency, and has power and authority over all the offices in the church, in all ages of the world, to administer in spiritual things." *(D&C 104:3b)* ***"The high priest and elder are to administer in spiritual things, agreeable to the covenants and commandments of the church: and they have a right to officiate in all these offices of the church when there are no higher authorities present."*** (D&C 104:7) How we slide over "agreeable to the covenants and commandments of the Church." We are not to be governed by any opinionated ideas, interpretations, or extrapolations, but only by the covenants and commandments of the Church.

Church History, Vol. 3, p. 664 states: "The holding of local and general conferences we believe to have been, and still to be, one of the surest, safest, and best means that could have been or that can be used to the accomplishment of a proper assimilation of thought and spirit among brethren, and the right understanding of doctrine among the teachers and those taught. These local and general conferences we believe to be authorized by the general laws of the church under which the promulgation of the gospel was to be carried on; and they are not therefore the creatures of local organizations called churches or branches. They are natural and necessary assemblings of the church officers for the transaction of necessary business connected with carrying out the great program of salvation, and for the free interchange of thought, expression of opinion, and the preaching of the word. We trust that such assemblings will be more largely attended than heretofore." Here again, Joseph III is expressing to us that these conferences are not the property of the branches. "The range of business which may be done at these conferences is very wide, and comprises all 'things necessary to be done;' the necessity for the doing of any particular business being the law governing the case, 'according to the Bible, and the Doctrine and Covenants.'"

Once again quoting from the Pattern Report, p. 5, "Once commandment (or inspiration and direction of the Holy Spirit) has been received..." I testify that this commandment has been received. "...and the Church organized and set in order by the Melchisedec priesthood, the body needs to consider and accept or reject if this is the will of God." Thus a General Conference on April 8-9, 2000.

Joseph III states, "What God clearly commands must be done; what the Spirit confirms, though it might be dictated by human wisdom, that is correct." [23] What God clearly demands must be done, but listen to what follows: "...what the Spirit confirms." You see, we believe in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. We believe that the Spirit gives direction, guidance and understanding. What is human wisdom? It surely includes study, prayer, fasting, class work, preaching – the Spirit working in the mind and will of man. "What the Spirit confirms though it might be dictated by human wisdom, that is correct." When the Spirit of God moves upon a man, a group of men, or a body of men, and dictates to them what they understand as being right and appropriate, and which can be confirmed by the scriptures, history, and the church covenants, it is correct.

Church History states: "The localizing a center of religious government was a measure introduced with a view of facilitating the carrying on of the work in its entirety; not for the purpose of centralizing power." It is simply saying that we need government, structure, and organization. The hierarchical structure that the Lord set in His Church was placed there to facilitate the carrying on of the work. "Those who now fear the concentration of power would do well to make a more thorough examination of the objects of church association, and study to a better conclusion the theory of the gospel as applied to human associations."[24] Do we expect that the kingdom of God [Zion] will have no structure, or leadership? If

[23] C.H., Vol. 5, p. 349
[24] C.H., Vol. 3, p. 665

we assume that, we assume wrongly, because human-kind cannot function harmoniously without structure and government. The quote goes on to say: "...concentration is only to be feared when the power of applying the remedy is denied or the law by which it is guaranteed is ignored." When we deny the work of the Holy Spirit, then we fear the concentration of power, but when we recognize the workings of the Holy Spirit in His Church, we recognize there must be a functioning organizational structure.

In Joseph III's *Letter of Instruction*[25] he writes, "Apparent direction for the accomplishment of certain designs has been given and when further and more definite direction does not follow, the Church is justified in pursuing that course which is to it justified by the spirit of wisdom and revelation... the Church is justified in doing that which is necessary to be done, by the wisdom that may be given it at the time such work is to be done...." He doesn't just throw it [the decision process] "wide open," but it does indicate that we do have some intelligence of our own. As a matter of fact, we are told to use that intelligence, since scripture tells us: ***"it is not meet that I should command in all things."*** He has given man his intelligence to use, and if He doesn't instruct in every detail, we are to use our intelligence and ask if it is right. By the Spirit of wisdom and revelation we shall be directed. Again, continuing the quote, "...the church is justified in doing that which is necessary to be done by the wisdom that may be given at the time such work is to be done."

In the *Word of Consolation*[26] - "Here is the key to unlock the whole secret of the presidency of the Church. Hear it then: The highest authority presides always. Hence, if the entire quorum of the first presidency is absent then the president of the twelve must preside, as pro tem.... And in the absence of the president of the twelve, either of the twelve, or in the absence of the whole quorum, the president of the high priests quorum will preside.... As I have said, it had become a law to us that the one holding the highest priesthood should preside." We have that situation now. The presidency and the twelve are not available to us in the right structure. We do have a body of high priests which is functioning, and it is the leader of that body whom the *Word of Consolation* says should be chairman of our restructuring program. That is exactly the way we are functioning.

Church History states: "If I had shown you at first, all would apostatize."[27] There is consistency in the Lord. On April 8, 1994, the Lord said exactly the same thing to us – "He will not give us a great manifestation, but will take us in small steps towards that which we are to accomplish. This way we will be able to assimilate His direction and will not move in haste and make mistakes."

In *Church History*, Joseph III states: "...one difficulty... was the existence of a prepondering disposition to wait to be told what to do, rather than to do what was clearly pointed out as a present and necessary duty."[28] This is what we have to be cautious of today, that we don't say, we're going to do nothing, we're just going to wait.

Joseph III states: "...return to the whole law, and to the covenants,.... The Bible, Book of Mormon, and Book of Doctrine and Covenants, contain that law, and those covenants or form of doctrine,.... Mark those who corrupt or pervert it, and avoid them."[29] I will leave it with his words and let you ponder them. ***"...there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel unto you.... As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."***(Galatians 1:7-9) Paul speaks quite strongly about how we react to those who teach or preach something other than the pure gospel. ***"Thus, none shall be exempted from the justice and laws of God; that all things may be done in order and in solemnity, before him, according to truth and righteousness."*** (D&C 104:37b)

"My servants have been harsh one with another; and some have not been sufficiently willing to hear those whose duty it is to teach the revelations which my church has already received. Until my people shall hear and heed those who are set in the church to teach the revelations there will be misunderstanding and confusion among the members." (D&C 122:1a,b) We might paraphrase this and say that until we of the priesthood listen to the words of the scriptures, and heed them, there will be misunderstanding and confusion among us as well.

An elder by the name of Henry Cuerden made this simple statement: "He advised the ministry not to persecute those who differed with them, as it was productive of much evil."[30] Brethren, I implore us this day in those same words. Let us not be persecuting one another or anyone else just because we have a difference of opinion. It is productive of only discord, disharmony and evil. Let me quote from two sections of the Doctrine and Covenants, 18:4c, ***"And thou shalt do it with all humility, trusting in me, reviling not against revilers,"*** and 30:3c ***"Be***

[25] C.H., Vol. 6. p. 560
[26] C.H., Vol. 3, p. 210
[27] C.H., Vol. 3, p. 220
[28] C.H., Vol. 3, p. 663
[29] C.H., Vol. 3, p. 298
[30] C.H., Vol. 3, p. 321

patient in afflictions, revile not against those that revile. Govern your house in meekness and be steadfast." I firmly believe that if we can abide by these revelations, we will bring harmony and peace among the saints, but if we use the tactics of reviling against those who speak falsely and harshly, we will bring the same condemnation upon ourselves, which shall befall anyone who speaks ill of another or the ways of God. Reviling merely creates evil and adds fuel to the flames of discord. When reviling meets no harsh reply, but only patient endurance, it meets an opponent which is more than its match. In *Church History*, Vol. 3, pg. 463, the same sentiments are recorded, "...there is a very great determination to prevent the incoming of wickedness." Those brethren had some of the same problems we are facing today. We are following in a similar pattern in almost every way. They were determined to prevent the incoming of wickedness into the reorganization. The history goes on to say, "if it only continues," (that great determination to prevent wickedness from coming in) – if that patience only continues and does not degenerate, then listen: "...if it does not degenerate into the spirit of malice and envy, we shall ere long become a happy people." I believe that! If we will keep out of our minds, our souls and our assemblies this malice, envying and reviling against anybody, any concept, any thought – if we can be determined to do that – then ere long we shall become a happy people.

Jason Briggs in *The Messenger* wrote: "The church has a promise, if obedient it should not be moved out of her place."[31] In D&C 98:4g, ***"Zion shall not be moved out of her place, notwithstanding her children are scattered they that remain and are pure in heart shall return and come to their inheritances; they and their children, with songs of everlasting joy; to build up the waste places of Zion. And all these things that the prophets might be fulfilled."*** Jason Briggs goes on to say, "but on the other hand, if they did not hearken, they should bring cursings instead of blessings and be rejected as a church." The extent and effect of this rejection as a church is clear from the words: ***"Behold, this is the blessing which I have promised after your tribulations, and the tribulations of your brethren; your redemption and the redemption of your brethren; even their restoration to the land of Zion to be established, no more to be thrown down."*** It's nice to stop there, but we can't; the prophet goes on, ***"nevertheless, if they pollute their inheritances, they shall be thrown down; for I will not spare them if they pollute their inheritances."***[32]

When Joseph Smith III was asked who should officiate in such a work and constitute such a reorganization as we are talking about, his answer was that it should be the individuals, elders and members not divinely rejected. *The Messenger* states, "Such an event then as rejection or disorganization is possible, not only upon general principles that this is the ordinary punishment of great and continued transgression, but it is expressly threatened."[33] Rejection and disorganization is possible not only upon general principle, but this is the ordinary punishment of great and continued transgression. It is the laws of any kingdom that determine its character.

Church History says: "When, therefore, leading men, ordained men, either knowingly and willfully, ignorantly and blunderingly, or themselves innocently deceived and deceiving, introduced that which subverted the design and turned aside the purpose, their right to act ceased; the 'amen' was spoken 'to their priesthood,' and they unchurched themselves; they had spoken that which the Lord had not declared." Is God consistent? Do these words still hold true in these days? Let me quote to you from the Blackgum message: "Those men of the institutional church who have violated mine ordinances and sacraments have lost their authority." We stand on sacred tenets this day. We also can lose our authority if we fail to live according to the covenants, commandments and scriptures of our God as he has given them. If we fail to heed that which is given to us in history and in scripture, then we, too, can fail and lose our authority.

The challenge is before us to heed what has been given and to do that which is necessary to bring God's church into the structure and organization that He intends. His blessings are held out to you in these words; ***"Yea, verily, thus saith the Lord, unto the elders of the church: continue in steadfastness and faith. Let nothing separate you from each other and the work whereunto you have been called; and I will be with you by my Spirit and presence of power unto the end."*** (D&C 122:17a,b)

May the Lord bless us as we endeavor to do that which is right before Him is my prayer.

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[31] *The Messenger*, Vol. 1, #1, p. 2

[32] D&C 100:3b,c

[33] *The Messenger*, Vol. 1, #1, p. 2

Renewal of the Church

Testimony of David Van Fleet

In spite of the fact that the institutional church has been undergoing change for many years, I felt for a long time that it would return to its roots eventually.

As the years came and went, I gradually changed my thinking to acknowledge that it [the church] had set its course and a change [to its origin] was unlikely. I increasingly became convinced that the Lord would again reorganize or renew His church. However, I had no spiritual evidence to confirm this opinion until June, 1997.

In May of that year, a problem arose which caused me to draw especially close to God. After about a month, I had an experience which did not address my problem, but allowed me the opportunity to ask, while I was in the Spirit, if it was permissible for the saints to reorganize the church. I was assured that it was permissible, which I understood to mean dutiful as well as acceptable. After that experience I started sharing my testimony, slowly at first, and more freely in time. The response was nearly always one of uncertainty, since those with whom I shared had no similar testimony. They obviously needed evidence of their own before they could accept it. I finally determined that, assuming I had not made a mistake in interpreting my experience, others would have a similar experience - and I would wait for them.

Nearly two years later, when a copy of the "Proclamation" was given to me, I received it with mixed feelings, because of negative publicity. I had to go out of town on a business trip about the same time, and while I was away, I dedicated one evening in my hotel room to spend in study and prayer concerning it. As has happened at other times, I became so engrossed in studying it [the Proclamation] that I did not notice until afterwards that the Spirit had been with me during the reading of one part. I took that as initial confirmation, but a second, more convincing testimony, came to me about a week and a half later. On a Sunday morning, while listening to the prelude before the preaching service, the Spirit suddenly came to me. I asked silently if this was in confirmation of the "Proclamation," to which the Spirit gave assurance that it was. When the Spirit gives assurance, there is no room left for doubt.

Since that time. I have supported the Remnant and have found the Spirit warming the hearts of the saints as they gather for worship and deliberation. Certainly the love of God is being shed abroad in the hearts of His people.

* * *

INSPIRED COUNSEL

During annual Conferences, several inspired messages giving counsel and direction to both the Elders and a waiting body of Saints in branches, groups and isolated conditions far and wide, have been received. Said counsel to be viewed in the same way guidance was received by the Elders in the 1850s, and in no way intended for inclusion with the revelations now contained in the Doctrine and Covenants, unless restated by a future Prophet President.

All of the messages which follow were authorized for printing and have been widely circulated among the "Restoration" Saints, beginning August 1993 through December 1997.

No. 1
Independence, Missouri – April 9, 1993

"Hearken, you elders of My Church, and listen to the voice from on high, you servants of My Father which is in heaven, My friends. And I call you My friends because you are, each of you. You have assembled yourselves here in this place because of My direction and because of your desires to respond to My Spirit.

"I have been in your councils. I have been in your business meetings. Do you not know that I am aware of your deliberations, of your struggles with each other, of your struggles within your own beings? And are you aware that by the power of My Spirit I have ministered to those beings and brought among you the peace that only can come from understanding? Do not despair. Do not let those differences among you separate you from each other in your high and holy calling that I have extended unto each of you. None are more important than the other. He who would be greatest among you must be the servant of the least one of you.

"Be faithful unto the calling which you now feel; and I, the Lord, will expand your vision of My kingdom, even far beyond that which you may see at this hour. And, in the enlargement of that vision, you may see more perfectly your opportunity to serve and to touch the lives of those around you. Opportunity will come to each of you to reclaim those who are lost, to stand in your places as witnesses of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Church, which has been brought into being by the power and the authority of that One who has called you.

"I shall send you out from this place and from your sanctuaries to minister unto a sin-sick world. I will send you into the cities, to the countryside, to the rich, to the poor, to the sick, and to the lame—that My ministry might be extended far beyond those boundaries that have been placed because of the attitudes and the desires of men.

"This Conference was not called because of the desires of men; it has not been directed by the desires of men—but by those who were willing to respond to My Spirit, by those who have had the eyes of their understanding expanded that they could see clearly the goal that is set before us. This Conference that I have caused to come into being was not the initial movement of My Spirit in the Restoration Movement in these latter days. There are others of My servants who have labored diligently to bring My people together that they might have even a greater understanding of My purposes. Some of My servants who have labored diligently have been called home, and they have received their reward. Others will see, and have seen, a change in the area of their ministry.

"But I say unto you, join together under the banner of the Lord Jesus Christ. Move out with faith. Trust in Me and in each other, and your blessings will abound far beyond that which you now can understand. Go, open your hearts, and receive the peace and My blessing and the assurance of My presence with you as you strive to become those servants which I have called you to be. And the mantle of My Holy Spirit shall rest upon you all the days of your life.

"Thus saith the Spirit of the Lord unto you, My friends."

No. 2
Independence, Missouri – April 6, 1994

As we entered into our prayers Monday morning, the Spirit of the Lord came upon me and revealed unto me a plan that I believe with all my being was inspired of our heavenly Father, to bring to this body of people and to the Restoration Movement that which our hearts and souls have cried for. He revealed to me that Brother Bowerman should choose from among the brethren in the various quorums and orders, men who can go and seclude themselves for

(No. 2 – Cont'd.)

whatever time it takes in prayer and fasting; and in that period of time the Lord made known to me He would give to them further instruction as to what needs to take place in this Restoration Movement.

I don't want to be misunderstood. He did not reveal to me any number of people. That was left to the one who would do the choosing under the divine instruction of our heavenly Father. He did not reveal unto me that there would be high priests called, bishops called and ordained, apostles—none of that was given to me—only that first step of bringing together a body of men committed totally, who will seclude themselves away from any outside interference, that the Lord might have complete influence in their gathering. I present this to you at the request of my brethren in the High Priests' Quorum as the Lord revealed it to me. Thank you.

No. 3
Independence, Missouri – April 8, 1994

As we come to share the concern and burden of asking the Lord to direct us, I've come to realize He will not give us a great manifestation, but will take us in small steps toward that which we are to accomplish. This way we will be able to assimilate His direction and will not move in haste and make mistakes.

As our brother selects those to be with him, let each of us support him with our prayers—no matter where we are—that he will select those men who will give him strength, and together they will come to an understanding of what the mind and will of God truly is for us.

If we do this, we will continue to be His people; we will then be the Church of Jesus Christ in these latter days to a greater degree than we could imagine is available to us. Most of the problems of our homes and families are we don't have a vision of what a home and family is to be under God's direction. In this same sense, we are called to be a family—to be one. We haven't a good vision of what it means to be one people—to be of one heart and mind. It is a place where each person can have a sense of freedom and understanding. His individuality can be expressed; he is not hampered by ego needs and psychological disturbances; but he is free to be all that God has called him to be.

May God bless you. Amen.

No. 4
Independence, Missouri – April 8, 1994

As a patriarch and with my brethren on the rostrum, you have waited all this week for us to speak as the Spirit gave us utterance. You heard my brother, Vernon Darling. Now listen well to what I have to share with you from the Lord.

For the most part, I am well pleased with the efforts of this Elders' Conference, and I am especially pleased with the young men who have shared the Word of God from Sunday to last night. And I am pleased with the parents that brought them up and trained them to follow in the footsteps of their fathers.

I have been pleased with your prayers and with your testimonies; and I am pleased with brother Karl, who has tried so hard to share in his broken English how he feels and wants to take back to his homeland that testimony of the Restoration. You can take it back, Karl, and they will understand because My Spirit will go before you, and it will meet you there.

You met last night with those from a foreign land. Their skin is black. And I am pleased at their efforts to come to this land of the white man, to sit in your midst and to bear their testimony and to take it back to the lands from whence they came.

For the most part, I have looked down with the angels from heaven, and we have smiled upon you; but there have been some things that displeased My Father, and He has expected Me to speak. There has been minutiae in your midst when you talked of things that were of no value to the Kingdom of God. You will not be heard for your much speaking; only those that apply to the direction of the remnant will be recorded in the heavenly diary.

There have been words placed upon my servant, David, and upon Jack Basse that were flavored with venom, and those words will be erased from their minds and will not be a burden to them. But the words will return to the tongues that spoke them, and they will burn as fire, and I will be slow to forgive.

You are the remnant. You ask why can we not organize? Because there are many yet to come into your midst, some who surround you close by and others miles and miles away. It is not yet time for you to be called by any other name than the remnant of the Church of Jesus Christ, a Church that I established and if you have aught against your brothers, then go to them.

(No. 4 – Cont'd.)

You talk about Satan and say, "Oh God, why can we not remove Satan?" Do you not know that the spittle from the mouth of the Son of God could drown him? But would that make you a better people because there is no temptation? If I removed all the barriers that stand between you and Me, would that make you a better people? I say unto you, "Nay." You need to fight the fight of faith. It will not be handed to you from Me because it is a gift from Me. And so you will be tempted, and you will be tried, and you will trip, and you will fall. But you'll get up as I got up when I carried the cross and when the black man, called Simon, helped Me carry it as I went to My crucifixion.

You are My people, and I love you. And I am standing by with the angels to help you. Be kind to one another.

Thus saith the Lord on this day.

No. 5
Independence, Missouri – April, 1994

In these confusing and trying times, a multitude of voices are proclaiming, "Lo here and lo there." Our very existence as those who have dissented from the leadership and a large segment of the "World Church," is even further threatened by the proliferation of independent factions with a widening variation of beliefs and practices.

Among the most basic reasons for Melchisedec conferences—the assembling of the Elders believing in and faithful to the original tenets of the Gospel as restored to the earth in 1830—is the determination to provide ministry and guidance to the thousands of saints who have been cast adrift in a sea of religious upheaval. "To the law and to the testimony" is a foundation on which we can and must build. The further admonition that, "If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them"(Isaiah 8:20) calls us to hold fast and prove all things.

The counsel of the Apostle Jude (1:3) to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" is a constant reminder to hold fast and try the spirits so actively seeking a following among scattered latter day Israel. By reaffirming the basics of our beliefs, as set forth in the 1993 Statement of Faith and Doctrine, we have endeavored to establish a standard around which the faithful can gather, and to which we can safely commit ourselves until further specific direction from the Lord is received.

Not unlike the experiences faced by those who gave guidance and direction during the formative years of "reorganization," we, too, are confronted with an array of claimants to prophetic office, special powers, unusual and often unscriptural interpretations, self-aggrandizement, and many more. To this we boldly proclaim that the practices of any groups or individuals not clearly supported by the Scriptures should not receive acceptance by the saints, nor should we bid them Godspeed by monetary support. Any practice or teaching which is done in secret, any doctrine that is proclaimed for an exclusive group, or any who claim a prophetic call must stand the test of confirmation by the Scriptures (the law) and the testimony of the Holy Spirit.

We therefore, solemnly warn and forewarn the faithful to be watchful and to be careful, with all inquiry, before receiving the claims of any man or any set of men as the word of the Lord. Only as we are prayerful and thereafter faithful to that which is already given in His Word, can we be sufficiently discerning and able to guard against the whisperings of Satan and the enticements of ambitious men.

To this end, the elders of the Church of Jesus Christ do again affirm the urgency of these times and call upon the faithful everywhere to hold fast to the doctrines clearly taught and earnestly believed since the ushering in of this last dispensation. We call upon the Saints to be fervent in prayer, upholding the priesthood before the Lord that we may acquit ourselves as worthy servants and watchmen on the tower. We also charge every minister—whatever his office and calling—to be true and steadfast, giving ourselves as faithful and trustworthy shepherds, knowing that in the day of reckoning, an accounting for the care and spiritual well-being of His people will be required at our hands.

Finally, be not hasty in judgment, but patient and longsuffering, enduring all things for Christ's sake. Wait on the Lord and trust not in the arm of flesh, but in Him Who is mighty to save. In faith and good works await instruction and leadership by and through such as God will in His own good time and pleasure bring to the Church.

May grace attend all the saints and keep us until He sets His Church in order once again and a faithful people arise to move the cause of Zion in mighty power for good.

No. 6
Blackgum, Oklahoma – September 4, 1994

During our deliberations, while engaged in earnest prayer on Saturday, September 3, 1994, the voice of inspiration came into our midst with the following instructions:

"I, the Lord, say unto you, that those men of the institutional church who have violated mine ordinances and sacraments have lost their authority. However, all have not been totally rejected of me and I will continue to strive with them. You must also be slow in rejecting them. Continue your efforts to re-claim them, especially those who have stood beside you as brothers in times past. My Church is in My hands and is being lifted up and sustained by those faithful saints who are holding fast to the fullness of My gospel."

In the spirit of counsel given to the church through Joseph Smith, III – (Doctrine and Covenants 119:4)– *"That the work of restoration to which the people of my church are looking forward may be hastened in its time, the elders must cease to be overcareful concerning the return of those who were once of the faith but were overcome in the dark and cloudy day, fearing lest they should bring in hidden heresies to the overthrowing of the work; for verily, there are some who are chosen vessels to do good, who have been estranged by the hindering snares which are in the world and who will in due time return unto the Lord if they be not hindered by the men of the church. The Spirit says "Come," let not the ministers for Christ prevent their coming."* – we commend that which we now send abroad to the saints as the direction of our Lord to the divided and waiting remnants of His Church.

No. 7
Independence, Missouri – April 1995

"There are those among us who have prayed earnestly for patience, that we would be willing to abide whatever time it takes for the Lord to address to us, in a clear fashion, steps that we should take or confirmation that we are doing things correctly thus far. And there are also among us men who are more anxious to see definite steps taken toward organization of a nature we have not yet known.

"I would remind each one of us of the patience of the Lord. It seems a long time that we have been in a separated condition, as a part of a fractured body; and yet the Church was in the wilderness for a long time. We have talked about the requirements of the conditions and qualities of our lives that will be needed in order for us to be directed by the Holy Spirit.

"Brethren, too many of us have been complacent in the places of our ministries because we are well housed, we have beautiful churches and sanctuaries, and there has been a tendency to think we have arrived. The body of Christ has been established so the ordinances can bring about—with the authority of you men—new life; and that new life is to be expressed in outreach to others, that many can come and share the vitality which the Spirit has to offer and by which communities can be changed.

"Therefore, there rests upon those who plan services of worship the responsibility of seeing that each component part is so addressed that people can be lifted to a higher plateau of spiritual life and challenged to open their minds through praise and adoration. Then they will be able to commit themselves to service and ministry, even as those of you have done so willingly. But it will take the continued example of you among them and those who preside to make sure that those services fulfill the possibilities of lifting people to a spiritual maturity which we have not yet known. It is only by that growth and spirituality that new life can really be evident in the communities in which we live.

"You chose in this place two years ago, and continue authorizing, a Coordinating Council to act as men who would in meeting together be able to supervise and oversee the various committees and councils provided by the Conference of Elders. It is a part of their responsibility, as determined by the body, to coordinate all of the councils in such a way that confusion and contradictions would be avoided and things could be done in order. There are those of the Evangelism Council who have not understood the responsibilities laid upon the Coordinating Council, and there have existed misunderstandings. It would seem wisdom for these men, as they leave this place after having adjusted to the business which will be done here to fulfill and complete their bodies, that they should talk and discuss together so that strength will rise where differences now exist.

"There needs to be a unity among the branches of this area which does not now exist. The Lord is withholding some blessings which He has in store until there is a greater unity and understanding, a coming together in cooperative activities among those various branches. He is concerned that there are those within the

(No. 7 – Cont'd.)

various branches who have not yet joined their strength to the strength of this body; but some will, if in patience you men are willing to reach out to them in love and in understanding. When other strength has been added to this group, then there are other things that will be forthcoming.

"It will be wise if evangelistic efforts in the Center Place are accelerated and more attention is given where there is already strength which can support other groups, even as was mentioned in Section 141 so long ago. There are elders in the Center Place who are able and willing to assist in missionary work in those places not too far distant. Greater strength should be encouraged in this place because of the population than in some places so far away. It is not that the Lord is less concerned with those halfway around the world, but He is concerned with what kinds of support can be given to those people once they are won. To what part of the body are they attached, and to whom are they responsible?

"Brethren, the Lord has already addressed Himself to you in this conference. You have heard some things applicable to our day. You heard some things yesterday afternoon presented to us as truths that are still applicable. We should ponder those truths and let them be our guide while we wait for other instructions."

No. 8
Independence, Missouri – April, 1995

"To the elders and all priesthood and members of the Restoration branches who are represented at this time and in this place—the Spirit of our Lord has moved upon my heart on your behalf for your counsel and your future.

"After counseling with other members of the patriarchs, I am permitted to speak as the Lord gave me direction; and with their support, I speak for Him now.

"'I am pleased with your assembly and with the concerns of your heart. You have felt Me near you and in your midst. You have heard My voice as My servants spoke to you and led your services. Your prayers have been heard where I dwell and where I wait the completion of My Kingdom.

"'I have heard your questions and concerns about the healings of My people. I speak now through My Servant.

"'Would you deliberately call a robber to heal your sick? You say, "Nay!" Yet there are robbers in the Melchisedec order whose minds are not on the holy things of God, but who seek for aggrandizement and who will accept no leadership except their own. Even My Spirit cannot move within them.

"'They are few in number, but their voices are raised in protest over matters of My remnant; and they have caused disunity in various parts of My vineyard. They lead My sheep by their much speaking, but wisdom does not prevail.

"'You have been commanded to be of "one heart and one mind." Your voices of objection to the chosen leadership of My remnant have caused a darkness to settle on the minds of many of My sheep and lambs, and they suffer doubt and despair.

"'Doubt and despair will lead to an illness that I cannot grant a blessing to heal. Faith no longer exists in a confused mind—and to be healed, there must be faith. Your pure faith, as well as the one who suffers, must be—or healing is denied.

"'When My priesthood are burdened in the strife for unity in the branches, their effectiveness is diminished and all will suffer.

"'I have once again stayed the hand of the Lord of the vineyard; and He will permit a little season. If the little season passes and there is still contention, then the Lord of the vineyard will trim His vineyard of every branch that bears only discontent as its fruit.

"'I love you; I died for you; but My patience and the patience of My Father is growing shorter. Criticize not these words—My servant had no choice; for as My servant, he must speak for Me.'"

No. 9
Independence, Missouri – May 1996

"The voice that you hear this morning will be the voice of the Holy One of Israel through My servant, even in his unworthiness.

"I, the Lord, would have you know that I have great love for each of you. But I would remind you, those whom I love I also chasten. I have not been well pleased with this Conference. You have been asked to come to this place and seek first My Kingdom. Some have come in sincerity; to others it has meant seeking your own will in your life.

"I have heard the murmurings and the back-biting in your discussions, both privately and in your meetings. I, the Lord, would say unto you that it is unbecoming to My people—and most especially unbecoming to My holy priesthood. The work of building up My Kingdom

in this Conference has been polluted because of the unwillingness and the un-repentance of you, My servants. Contention is not of Me, but of that evil one who controls the world in which you live.

"There have even been murmurings and discussions as to the validity of the office of high priest in My Church. Do you not know that by power and authority the One who speaks to you has called and set in His Church that office to provide leadership and direction to you, My people, and to My Church? That leadership many times has been hindered by the attitudes and the whisperings of those who seek first their own will and not Mine.

"Many of you have discussed the coming of One mighty and strong. I say to you that One mighty and strong will come when My people have sufficiently purged themselves of all unrighteousness, that My power may be released among them. Many of you have also discussed in your private conversations in your homes, with your families, My coming. But I say unto you, that even though I come quickly, I will come to a place and to a people who are prepared to receive Me unto themselves. There is much work to be done by those whom I have called, who are willing to subject themselves to the discipline and to the sacrifice of purging themselves, that the Lord Almighty might rule supreme in the lives of His people.

"Thus saith the Lord unto you. Amen."

No. 10
Independence, Missouri – May 31, 1996

The Lord says to you this morning: "David W. Bowerman, while not perfect, is a man of integrity and trustworthy and worthy of your trust. He has been guided by My Spirit. He has spent many lonely and burdened times in prayer and contemplation seeking guidance for a sometimes stiff-necked and hardened people, even some who serve with him in the Coordinating Council. Yet he has been blessed by My Spirit and has served Me well. Know ye not that there are times when as your leader he is powerless to direct you in the right paths because of your desire to have only your own way? Know ye not that he is My servant and is worthy of your trust? I am sorrowed by those who malign his integrity and who say and write untruths about him. As he has continued to make himself available to Me to lead you in these difficult and confused times—even when he would have, according to his own desires, withdrawn to the peace of his own home and the warmth of his own loved ones—I have blessed him with strength to continue, in spite of those who would have destroyed him. I commend him to you and counsel you to follow his leadership as he continues according to My Spirit, that you may be blessed in your efforts to hold fast.

"Do not run before Me, and yet do not languish and hesitate to move out in My work. Use wisdom and call upon Me for all things and for guidance at every step; and I will bless you, and you will receive line upon line, and precept upon precept.

"Thus saith the Lord."

No. 11
Independence, Missouri – May 31, 1996

I can't remember when I first longed for Zion. It has been a part of my life—the hope that it would come about—and I know it shall for the Lord has declared it! And there will come a day in all its splendor and majesty, when the nations will be constrained to acknowledge that Zion is in very deed the Kingdom of our God and His Christ. And because of that, I came to this Conference hoping and longing with all my heart that the High Priests and Elders would remember that upon them rests the stewardship of all the spiritual blessings God has in store for His Church.

But I observed, as others said they have observed, the interest of men directed toward peripheral things instead of the central thought of the Kingdom. Too little effort has been made to agree upon the word, by which our brethren spoke so eloquently.

I have seen the contentment to form committees instead of following the admonition of the Scripture which says that if you lack wisdom, ask of God, Who is liberal and doesn't upbraid, but gives as the requirement of those who are agreed; and petition Him. I still hope in the Kingdom. My years are passing like my brethren here, but Zion will be. I long to see the time when we can come into this sanctuary and other places of worship, as the Psalmist has said, "in the beauty of Holiness."

This is the nature of the One we worship, but the baggage that we oftimes carry into the sanctuary prevents us from having that beauty. And there is no beauty like that of a sinless life. We have been called to stay by the Lord and to purge ourselves; and I trust the promise of the Lord, Who says, "When you repent, I will forgive you." I hope that I can live that kind of life, as you do—so the Lord can abide with us.

No. 12
Independence, Missouri – December 22, 1997

The Spirit expressly directs..."Hearken ye people of My Church, you who have witnessed, and endeavored to withstand the onslaught of evil and disruptive forces, whose desires have been for the fulfillment of My Kingdom, but whose dedication has been divided and whose strength has been diminished. Listen anew to the voice of your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel...your time of opportunity is growing short. Your shepherds, My servants are becoming weary in their duty to guard and protect My flocks, and days of further uncertainty are at your very doors. I say unto you by the voice of warning, the powers of the adversary will overcome all who refuse to stand in Holy places and keep my commandments.

"The day of decision is upon you, My servants the Elders of My Church, as a whirlwind. No longer can you stand separate and divided. The souls of My people, and those around you who wait outside the fellowship of covenant with Me, are required at your hands by Me, your Lord and your God.

"You are admonished, not alone by those who have been chosen to lead, whose counsel has been treated lightly and often with disdain, but by the One who bore the cross and suffered the shame of it, that you might be made free...free to keep your solemn oaths to be My ministers and servants in these last of the latter days. Who of you do not know of My love? Who among you have not been blessed with a multiplicity of blessing? Can you yet wait in indifference, in the bonds of indecision and some even in bitterness of spirit, while My Spirit even now, again calls you to be one...to be Mine?

"The day is far spent and again I say judgment is at your very doors. Repent, repent all ye Elders of My Church and humble yourselves before Me lest ye be further overcome by the adversary, whose influence and power is abroad in the land. Study My word as it is given in My scriptures, especially in the Doctrine and Covenants, those commandments which pertain to My Church and Kingdom in this last dispensation. Resist no longer the counsel you have received through your fellow servants in your search for understanding. Learn wisdom from the trials and tribulations of those who have gone before you and found favor in their day in reorganizing and renewing My Church.

"My blessings await your faithfulness. Those who stand by in judgment and hope for signs of their own making will be left confused and in the gall of bitterness. Remember oh remember, my servants, the signs of My divine sanction come to those who exercise faith in Me and keep My commandments. And My commandments are before you, along with the resolutions of My servants who walked the valleys of despair and confusion, but who persevered and triumphed in My grace. Resist no longer the covenants and commandments of My Church which I, the Lord, have brought forth and preserved for your guidance and direction, and which once again await the diligent and sanctified effort of those who will accept with renewed hope and faithfulness My commission to be among the last servants in My vineyard.

"I know the yearnings of those who feel concern, in the deepest recesses of their souls, for the forsaken masses, the oppressed and the downtrodden, and I commend their noble desires. But those desires must find fulfillment in My law, and within the framework of My Church, lest their well intentioned efforts end in even greater confusion. You, My servants, are counseled to seek unity in My word and by My Spirit and forsake your determination to take My work into your own hands, whether in the branches of My people or organizations of your own making. My work will not be frustrated but your strivings, not blessed of My Spirit, will surely end in confusion. Even your assemblies in Conference cannot be granted the blessings of Heaven if contention has place among you.

"The Spirit saith expressly to you My servants and also to My people, heed these words of counsel and admonition. The day of your probation is far spent. I speak not by way of commandment. My commandments are before you and ye heed them not. But I say, listen...listen to the voice of My Spirit, none of you is more important than another. Some have been called to lead because it is necessary that you My servants be called upon this one more time to unite in great humility before Me, your God. Cast aside your differences and seek My deliverance.

"These words I speak again by way of invitation and warning. Move forward in patient and fraternal good will. If you are diligent and faithful, I will bless your efforts with manifestations of light and wisdom to the renewal of My remnant saints in My own good time. Be patient and cleanse yourselves of all rancor and hostility or you are not Mine.

"Thus saith the Spirit unto the faithful Elders of My remnant Church."

Remnant Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints
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February 27, 2002

To: The membership of the Remnant CHURCH of JESUS CHRIST of Latter Day Saints

To lay aside any speculation on the part of the membership and to prepare for an orderly Spring General Conference of the Church (April 5, 6 & 7, 2002), this communication is being sent to all on the current membership mailing list and to each of the Presiding officers of the various organized branches and groups.

The last several years have been very eventful ones in my life. As I look back over the years, it is obvious to me that there has been a guiding hand leading me to the present situation in the renewing of Christ's Church known today as "The Remnant Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints". This Church joyfully proclaims the Gospel as restored to the earth April 6, 1830–continued in the Reorganization of 1860–fractured in the 1980's, and now step by step has been restructured to the present organization. I have quietly supported and provided ministry, whenever called to do so, to this pattern of the renewing of Christ's Church, but recent events have led to a calling that I cannot set aside. I come in a time, not unlike my great grandfather Joseph Smith III, to a scattered and awaiting remnant of faithful believers in the original Restored Gospel. It appears that once again, in these last days, the "seed of Joseph" has been called into the service of our Lord.

It is only in the last several weeks that I have shared this calling with the members of the Quorum of Twelve and my own family. And now I relate it to you, the membership,–*It is my intention to present to the Quorums and the General Conference in April an Inspired Document responding to a call to the Presidency of the High Priesthood and of the Church of Jesus Christ.*

As I told the brethren of the Quorum of Twelve on February 8 of this year, I say to you–the time is now here for the next step in the renewal of His Church, that of providing a Presidency. I come not by my own planning or desires, but only in response to Him who rules above. I can barely contemplate the impact this action will have, not only on the membership, but on those outside the fellowship. But that is the joy, as such, and the burden, that I am willing to bear. I earnestly solicit your prayers as together we look forward to the Conference and it's subsequent action.

Fraternally yours,

Frederick N. Larsen

Frederick N. Larsen.

FREDERICK NIELS LARSEN

Biography

Frederick Niels Larsen, President/Prophet of the Remnant Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, was born January 15, 1932 in the house occupied by his grandfather, Frederick M. Smith, President/Prophet of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. The house in Kansas City, Missouri was the home of his parents Edward J. Larsen, a Danish immigrant and Lois A. (Smith) Larsen, daughter of the President/Prophet. The family moved to a 20 acre farm in East Independence in 1937. Here Fred was raised with a farm life and attended eight years at the DeKalb grade school located adjacent to the front yard of the farm home. After one year at the Independence Junior High School and one year at the William Chrisman High School the family moved to Santa Ana, California where Fred attended Garden Grove Union High School graduating in 1950.

While attending Graceland College in Lamoni, Iowa and the University of Kansas City Missouri, Fred concentrated his interests in the field of the Physical Sciences and graduated in 1959 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Chemistry. While attending college he worked in the analytical laboratories of the Lake City Arsenal, the Great Lakes Pipeline Co., Chemagro Corporation, and the Bendix Corporation. He retired from Bendix (now Honeywell Corp.) in 1994 after 35 years of service. Fred served as a consultant in the field of Polymer Science at the Lawrence Radiation Laboratory in Livermore, California in 1975 and 1976. After "retirement" he joined his brother Daniel in a capital venture company, Infinity Inc., and assisted in building wastewater treatment plants in Chanute, Kansas and Cheyenne, Wyoming. Fred's latest work effort has been with the City of Independence Police Department's Crime Scene Unit, where as a Forensic Chemist for the last 5 years he has analyzed illicit drugs and methamphetamine labs for the City and the Jackson County Drug Task Force. His retirement from full time employment is scheduled for September 30, 2002.

Through his brother Steve's arrangement, Fred met and later married a young lady by the name of Mary Louise Malott. Fred and Mary Lou, as she prefers to be called, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary June 7, 2002. They have five children, Larry, Linda, Luann, Brian, and Stephen and ten grandchildren.

Fred has always had a close association in the Church with those descendents of Joseph Smith, Jr. He was blessed as a baby and confirmed a member of the Church by his grandfather, Fred M. Smith; ordained to the office of Priest in 1956 by Israel A. Smith, his great uncle; ordained to the office of Elder by W. Wallace Smith, his great uncle and he and Mary received their Patriarchal Blessings by Elbert A. Smith, a second cousin. Fred was very active in his priesthood ministry at the East Alton and Beacon Heights R.L.D.S. branches in Independence. After 1984, he withdrew from active ministry until 1996 when he began to attend the Blue Springs Restoration Branch and the Conference of Restoration Elders. Taking an active role in a Prayer and Study Group, Fred was one of the twelve signers of the "Proclamation and Invitation to the Faithful" in May, 1999. After the Remnant Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints was formally accepted as the true church in succession on April 6, 2000, Fred was ordained to the office of High Priest at the next Conference on April 8, 2001 and set apart as President of the High Priests Quorum.

After several inspirational experiences culminating in a revelatory message, Fred presented to the General Conference convening in April, 2002 a call to the office of President of the High Priesthood and the Church and Prophet, Seer and Revelator. The Conference unanimously accepted the call and Fred was ordained to that office of President/Prophet on April 6, 2002. Fred spends as much time as he can at the Office of the Presidency in the Church offices at the old William Chrisman High School until he retires from the Independence Police Department. He looks forward with great enthusiasm to providing fulltime leadership to the Remnant Saints and the Church in this last dispensation and in the preparation for building the Kingdom of God on this earth, even His Zion.■

THE TESTIMONY OF FREDERICK N. LARSEN
Saturday, April 6, 2002

Have you folks ever been borne upon the wings of prayer? I can testify to you this morning that I know that feeling. Early in this week I came down with a very bad cold and sore throat. On Wednesday I had some grave concerns about being able to even speak this weekend, but I know you were concerned about my situation and my health. You prayed for that and I have felt physically the bearing of those prayers that have allowed me to come here and to sustain my composure and hopefully to bring you a message.

As my letter to the membership which was dated February 27, 2002 indicated, and I quote, "It is my intention to present to the Quorums and the General Conference in April an Inspired Document responding to a call to the Presidency of the High Priesthood and of the Church" I have asked for a moment to bring additional background and a personal testimony regarding the coming forth of the Document. Most of you know something about me, but I have thought it appropriate to give the rest of you some biographical information at this time. Some of this information will probably be available over the Internet and will surely in due course be in the *Hastening Times.*

I was born of parents who lived with my grandfather, the Prophet Frederick M. Smith, in Kansas City, Missouri. I don't know if you are aware that because of the difficulties in the periods of the 20's and 30's, he moved to Kansas City and it was in that house I was born on the 15th of January, 1932. Three months later I was blessed. I did not know this until just a few weeks ago, when I sought my records from the Reorganized Church. Indeed, I was blessed by Frederick M. Smith and Apostle P. T. Andersen. Apostle Andersen was the one who had converted my father, who emigrated from Denmark in 1929 to be a missionary. Unfortunately, due to the situation at the time, he was not able to do that, as the Church released, and did not have enough money to support, so many of them. We moved to Independence, Missouri in 1937 on the 20-acre farm out on Holke Road, where I was raised. I was baptized in the Stone Church at the age of 9 years by my father and confirmed that same day by the President of the Church, Frederick M. Smith. I was ordained a priest in 1956 under the hands of the Prophet Israel A. Smith, and an elder in 1960 under the hands of W. Wallace Smith and Charles V. Graham. As you are aware I was ordained a High Priest last Conference by brethren, Bowerman and Miller. I also received my Patriarchal Blessing when my wife and I needed some guidance, and that was under the hands of Brother Elbert A. Smith. Finally as you may know, my mother, Lois Audentia Smith Larsen, was the daughter of Frederick Madison Smith, who was the third President of the Church.

In June of this year my good wife and I will have been married fifty years. Mary Louise Malott Larsen is a native of Independence. We have five children, Laurie, Linda, Luann, Brian and Stephen, and ten grandchildren, almost all of whom reside in the Independence area. I attended William Chrisman High School, the old building, where our Church offices are now located. Our family moved to California in 1948 and I graduated from Garden Grove Union High School in 1950, attended Graceland College in 1950-51, transferred to Kansas City University, and graduated in 1959 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Chemistry and later did some further graduate work in that field. I have had a varied background in terms of vocation in the field of Chemistry and Material Science and retired from Allied Signal after thirty-five years in that profession. I now actually work for the Independence Police Department as a forensic chemist with the intent to retire from there at the end of this summer.

Mary and I attended the Beacon Heights Congregation and were very active in that group until 1984, when Section 156 was presented. We could not support it and dropped out of sight as it were. For the next several years I was very inactive. I now feel there was probably a real reason for that. I did not associate myself with any of the early restoration movements, nor join any of the independent branches, and there was a reason for that. In October of 1996 I was invited to attend the Prayer and Study Group, that group of men who were attempting to understand what the Lord had in mind for His Church, which was so scattered and fragmented. From that time I was involved with the Conference of Restoration Elders. The one thing that impressed me so much was the group of messages that came by inspiration through the High Priests and Patriarchs to that body of men. The intent was for that body to associate, unify and to bring the Church into order. I want to read a couple of excerpts in your hearing from some messages that were given at those Conferences. In 1994 Brother Vernon Darling, a Patriarch, gave this as a part of a message, "I have come to realize that He will not give us a great manifestation, but will take us in small steps toward that which we are supposed to accomplish. This way we will be able to assimilate His direction and will not move in haste and make mistakes." At the same Conference, Patriarch Robert Murie stated, "You are the remnant. You ask why can we not organize. Because there are many yet to come into your midst,

some who surround you close by, and others miles and miles away. It is not yet time for you to be called by any other name than the remnant of the Church of Jesus Christ, a Church that I established...." Remember this was 1994. In 1996 High Priest Jack Basse brought this message, "Many of you have discussed the coming of one mighty and strong. I say to you that one mighty and strong will come when My people have sufficiently purged themselves of all unrighteousness that My power may be released among them." I am not quite sure that we have reached the point of purging ourselves of all unrighteousness, but I can attest to you this group that sits before me is on that road and have proved their righteousness, to Him who reigns above, to bring us to this point.

In October 1996 I participated in the first Prayer and Study Group session mentioned earlier. And then in 1999, I was privileged to be a part of that group of twelve men who met in the Carthage Church and signed our names to a document called The Proclamation and Invitation to the Faithful that you are so familiar with. Later on in July of that year the Council of High Priests was formed, and once again I would remind you that the message given through Brother Lee Killpack was for those three Patriarchs to select seven brethren to be Apostles. At the end of that message if you recall, Brother Lee under the inspiration of Almighty God said, "Be faithful, little flock, and in my time I will send you one mighty and strong again to be your President and Prophet, Seer and Revelator." At that same Conference Brother Basse brought this message from which I quote, "I was instructed to say unto you that your prayers have been heard in regard to the one who shall be called in the future to come and take his rightful place as Prophet, Seer and Revelator to the Church. I have been told to share with you that I the Lord know who he is, and he also knows who he is. At the proper time and the proper place it will be revealed unto you." There was no question when he brought that message that I knew who it was. I think Brother Jack wanted to mention my name at that point, but it was withheld for reasons known only to God.

And so it is that we have reached this point. Obviously there have been some indications on my part of that which was to come. I had several experiences during worship at my home congregation in Blue Springs. On at least two separate occasions in November of 2000 the Lord revealed to me very clearly that the mantle of leadership would fall upon my shoulders. And then specifically on March 5 of last year, in my waking moments under the voice of clear inspiration to me, there was given a message which contained many things, a part of which will be in the Document to be presented. I shared with Brother Dave Bowerman at that time indications of things that were to come. Earlier, at the September of 2000 Priesthood Conference, I was also spoken to by the voice of inspiration and I presented that message in the closing remarks to the brethren assembled. It was reconfirmed to me the fact that a Prophet would be coming. It was in a gentle way that these things have worked to this point. In the instruction given to me there were requisites to be met prior to my coming that required preparation on my part. They culminated in a rather on-the-spot quick trip, made available by my brother who took us to Kirtland, Ohio in December. We had the privilege of visiting and touring the Kirtland Temple, my wife and I and my brother Dan and his wife. At that time my nephew, Brother Lochland McKay, who is a member of the Community of Christ, was giving us the tour and extending every hospitality in the Temple as he talked about its background. I had a reason for going there, all unbeknown to him. I asked Loch if it would be possible for me to go upstairs to the third floor, into the room on the far west corner, which I knew has great significance. It was where my great-great-grandfather, Joseph Smith the Martyr, had his study. Loch was a little hesitant, not very anxious to do that, because most people don't get up there. He said, "Yes, Fred, that's fine. Go ahead." So I climbed those stairs to the third floor and walked through those rooms to the west end and there came a complete confirmation for the calling.

After that, it was now obvious to me the Church needed leadership at this very point. There was some indication on my own part that it might be delayed for another year, but that I learned was too long. And so it was on February 8th of this year, when the Quorum of Twelve would be meeting, I told Brother Dave I needed to join them and make a presentation. As I met with the brethren, and told them of the situation and what I thought needed to be done, it was agreed that I should send a letter to the membership. I didn't want any unfounded rumors or expectations to occur regarding the Conference which was approaching. Obviously there needed to be planning that would be appropriate for what we are to do this weekend, so the letter went out. Then lastly on March 9th I shared my testimony with the Order of Patriarch-Evangelists.

And I just simply would say this morning that subsequent to that moment there have indeed been many testimonies of support for this calling. I say to you that I come not by a power of my own but the time is here for the next step, and not by my planning but by Him who rules above. And so I present myself to you. The Document will be presented shortly, and I trust that together we shall indeed find the Spirit of God supporting us and continuing to direct us.■

PRESIDENT LARSEN'S ACCEPTANCE STATEMENT

I can share with appreciation your joy and excitement, and the anticipation of this hour. Once again I can only be thankful to my God on High for the prayers that have sustained me through these past few days and weeks, and particularly this week in which I really had concern about whether I would be able to stand here and speak. But here I am nonetheless.

I now wish to make a statement of acceptance if you would indulge me. It is with a deep sense of gratitude that I come before you to accept this high honor which you have placed upon me. It was with a large degree of fear and trembling that I actually approached this Conference. I have given you somewhat of the background that has brought me to this point but there is more. As I look back on the past years it becomes more obvious that so many events have occurred pointing to this moment. The Lord in his quiet, gentle way has, I believe, seen me and my family through many trials and I am ever grateful to Him for His love and His watch care.

Some of you have perhaps heard my testimony of Him, that He is the Lord Jesus Christ, some of you have not. My first real encounter with the Lord Jesus, when I saw Him as it were in person in my bedroom, was when my wife had called for the Elders to administer to me. I was suffering the disease of crippling polio back in the 1950's. As those Elders administered, the very presence of the Lord was there, and I was healed of that crippling disease. Yes, by His mercy I was healed. On another occasion, one night as I was praying at the foot of the bed I was granted the vision of seeing the Father and the Son much as young Joseph had seen in the Grove, for there was that voice from on high while pointing to the other personage saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear Him." Yes, I can testify to you that the Lord Jesus is my Savior and that through Him, if I remain faithful and endure to the end, I shall see Him in the realms of Glory. You, the faithful remnant, have given me such prayerful support through these last few weeks that I know of a surety that the power of prayer has given me the strength and confidence to go forward. Even though I have had evidence of this Divine call I recognize that my leadership must of necessity be approved by the body of the Church membership, for ours is a theocratic democracy, and it must always be so. All that must be done, must be done with your approval. You have now done so, and I pledge to you that I will devote my Office and Calling to bring to pass the purposes of God in our lives. Let us always remember that even though we have gathered and brought together the Remnant Church as it was originally intended, there is still much for us to do, and that the purpose of the Church is simply to bring souls to Christ, and to prepare them in turn for the Kingdom of God on earth.

I can tell you that truly I am uncomfortable with all the focus and attention that has been brought to myself. But I do understand the circumstances and the excitement and the anticipation that you share at this time. I would remind you that there is much more important business that this Conference must address, and I trust that you will consider the items that follow with utmost diligence. I do come lacking somewhat in administrative experience and thus it is reassuring, very reassuring to me, that Brother David Bowerman has been called as a Counselor in the First Presidency. I think that we all should be eternally grateful to Brother Bowerman's devotion to the Lord and the work of renewing the Church, for he has thus helped bring us this far and I am proud to have him for a counselor, and that is the Lord's desire. If any of you lack confidence in my ability to serve in this Office and Calling may you withhold judgment without prejudice. I shall always do my best to win a place in your good graces. I am confident, that with the marvelous unity of spirit and mind that is felt in our assembly, we can overcome any adversary and move in great assurance, so that which we do is right with the Lord.

I testify to you with all my mind, heart and soul that the Remnant Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints is the true successor to the original Church, established by Joseph Smith, Jr. in 1830 and reorganized in 1860. I can testify to you that the Book of Mormon was indeed divinely translated and is truly an added witness of the Lord Jesus Christ. In these last days the Lord does reveal Himself to mankind through prophetic leadership, and I trust that within whatever way He chooses to reveal Himself to us, that I might be given the insight and be the oracle for bringing us closer to His Kingdom on the earth. Finally my fellow saints I want to once again express my gratitude for your support and prayers, not only for myself but also for my dear wife, Mary Lou, who must have a large burden to bear after this. We both appreciate your kindness and concern during these last few weeks and we certainly look forward to being in your midst in the days ahead.

May God bless us all as we strive to build His Kingdom, even His Zion. Thank You.■

ORDINATION OF FREDERICK NIELS LARSEN

President of the High Priesthood and the Church

By David W. Bowerman and P. James Buchman, Quorum of Twelve
David R. Van Fleet, President of the High Priests Quorum

Almighty God, Our Heavenly Father, thou who art great and marvelous, the extent of whose doings, O Lord, none of us can find out. Here in this sacred moment we come into the presence of Thy Holy Spirit, before this body of people, Thy people assembled in Conference, and place our hands upon the head of thy servant to ordain and set him apart. In doing so, O Lord, we confess our own unworthiness and call upon Thee to sustain us that we might present ourselves acceptably before Thee and that by the influence and inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit the words spoken may bring to our brother, and to the Church, the Divine direction which will, from this moment, lead us forward in a greater measure of faith.

Dear Bro. Frederick Niels Larsen, the Lord has called you out from among men and now places upon you the mantle of prophetic office. You are hereby ordained to be the President of the High Priesthood of the Church and consequently President, or Presiding Elder, over the whole Church. With this ordination there is given to you the mantle of a Prophet, and a Seer, and a Revelator. As occasion requires, as the circumstances arise, as the Holy Spirit gives utterance and the Lord directs, you may bring to the Church, and unto the world, those things that pertain to eternity.

Our Heavenly Father, we pray in all humility Thy Divine and choice blessings upon Thy servant Frederick, that his very being may be quickened within, that he may receive a reserve of health and strength, that he may be able to go forth among the Church delivering Thy word, setting in order, guiding, directing and leading the affairs of Thy Kingdom here upon this earth. And, O Lord, even now, we recognize here in this moment, a moment of eternity, and we are made aware that the blood of the Prophets courses through his veins and there is granted unto him the power and the authority that will enable him to stand, not only among his brothers and sisters in the faith, but before the world as one who proclaims Divine truth.

O Lord, bless him especially with patience, with endurance and with that hope which springs eternal. May he stand before us as an example of one who is commissioned to be a representative of Thy Glorious Son. So we commend him to Thee now, praying not only for his care and keeping but asking a blessing upon his loved one, his companion, that she, too, may sense the calling that is extended to her to stand by his side, to be a comfort and a source of strength to her husband. We pray also for his family that there might come to each one of them an awareness their father has been called of Thee to be a special servant for a very special time.

And now our Father, we pray in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, that all these gifts and blessings may be bestowed upon him. From this moment forward may he stand as a strength to Thy people, a representative of Thy Son, that the Church may move forward to the glorious consummation of the great work that is set before us.

To this end and for these purposes, and to Thy name's honor and glory, we pronounce these blessings upon his head and ordain him and set him apart to this prophetic function and role in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, our Savior. Amen.